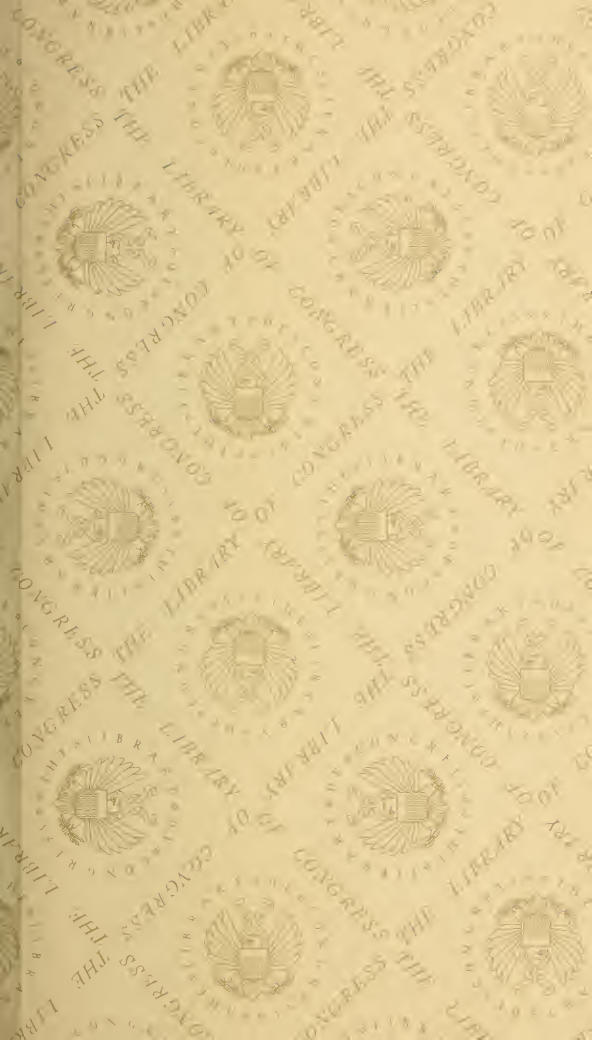


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THE
PERSONAL MINISTRY
OF THE
GOSPEL.

AS TAUGHT AND EXEM-
PLIFIED BY THE LORD AND
HIS APOSTLES.

BY

JOHN CULP.

WARRENSBURG, MO.

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Different circumstances, however in an uneventful life, might be referred as causes contributory to this little volume. Possibly as many more are unseen. Surveying those things, then view the faults in the effort upon the subject, besides a subject so extremely unpopular, seems to add foolishness to error in the attempt to introduce it to the public. But there is another side to the matter. Is the doctrine of a personal ministry the truth, of which there remains not the least doubt, and it is the fact that adverse circumstances, as it may also logically be concluded, have contributed in bringing about this little work; then with all the regrets of misappropriated time in not procuring education in early life and all those other unpleasant circumstances religiously encountered in life, I am forced to exclaim: "My possessions are fallen in agreeable places: yea, my heritage is pleasant to me." Ps. 16: 6.

Then, the doctrine advocated in this work being the truth, and it being the product of adverse circumstances, who may not rejoice and share in this work? Why, those who might be thought least worthy to share in the work are made contributors to the work. Then the personal ministry of the Gospel commending itself under these circumstances let it be acceptable, and the Lord be praised by all.

Dec. 1894.

THE

Personal Ministry.

OBJECT.

The restoration of the primitive method of spreading the gospel ; by impressing the responsibility of a personal proclamation of the Gospel; thereby making the Gospel free; — "without money and without price."

The establishing of the grand principle of equality. "Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked [roads] shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth." Luke 3:5.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal, 3 : 28.

The abolishing of the worldly insti-

tution of electing or otherwise appointing a few men to minister in the Gospel which creates a class clothed with authority in the church, whereby the spreading of the Gospel is made to depend upon begging money.

NOTE:— Many of the scripture quotations in this work are from the *Emphatic Diaglott*. A translation from Greek MSS. that are centuries earlier than those from which our common bible was translated. See preface, *Emphatic Diaglott*.

INTRODUCTORY

By the term *Personal Ministry* is meant that all God's children, male and female are commissioned at the time of their baptism to go and preach the Gospel.

By the term *official ministry* as employed in this work, is meant the present system of making the ministry of the Gospel an office to which individuals are appointed by hierarchal bodies, or church elections, granted by a set of officers who guard the office of the ministry as it given to them by special appointment of God.

Of course, in opening such a door of liberty under present conditions, caused by an official ministry, a great timidity would be manifest even with disciples who have lived long in the church. But with wisdom, care and patience on the part of elders of the congregation, talents would soon be developed for the benefit of the congregation

The idea inculcated by the official ministry that there are those who have no talent to employ for the benefit of the congregation, is contradicting the scriptures and making the membership to appear idiotic respecting the economy of their salvation, and that they depend upon the presumptuous who claim that they have been specially elected or called by the Holy Ghost for to secure their salvation.

True, all may not have oratorical or evangelizing power, but there is abundant room for all talents in building up and developing talents in the evangelized.

The *Personal Ministry* recognizes no difference in the successful and unsuccessful employment of the talent publically. Merit in the kingdom of Christ is not indicated in this way. But this is not all: There is no such a thing taught in the scriptures as advanceing some in "degrees" of honor and authority and retarding others. The members are all equal however unequal in talent.

The idea very readily suggests it-

self in the doctrine of an individual ministry, that experienced men and women with good characters, as soon and fast as can be secured, even if the abilities are moderate, should immediately employ themselves in appointments outside the congregation; otherwise their presence should not be permitted to interfere in the practical exercises of those in the congregation at home.

Another note of explanation that is necessary to make in this introduction, is that the offices of elder and deacon are fully sustained in the doctrine of the Personal Ministry. But these positions are given to those who have been proven in the system of the Personal Ministry. Then if found to possess the qualification of 1 Tim, 3, they are permitted those positions of service.

But let it be distinctly understood that those descend to that of a position of servants according to Matt. 20: 26, 27. "It is not so among you; but whoever may desire to become great among you, let him be your servant; and whoever may

desire to be chief, let him be your slave . " Again , Mark 9:35 . " If any one desires to be first he will be last of all , and a servant of all . "

And 10 : 43 , 44 . " But it is not so , among you ; but whoever may desire to become great among you , shall be your servant , and whoever among you may desire to become chief shall be slave of all . "

This also explains 1 Tim . 3 : 1 . " If any one longs after an overseers office he desires an excellent work . Here it is noticed that the position may be desired because it is not of an exalted nature , and for the simple reason that it is a position of servitude , instead of speakership and authority , as under the official ministry . "

Neither does the position of the elders require the gift of oratory as we learn from 1 Tim . 5 : 17 . " Let the elders who preside well be esteemed worthy of double honor , especially those who toil in word and teaching . " Here the same position is referred to but requires neither preaching or teaching in it .

These passages are difficult of application in the foreign system of an official ministry of the Gospel, but are significant in the personal method.

Presidents in the Personal Ministry are required to be "apt teachers," to be competent to preside, but they do not necessarily need to either preach or teach, but under the official ministry the charge is *preaching*, with a jealous care to guard the office, with the administration of baptism, sacrament, making and enforcing a creed.

The labors of a president that teaches, consists in fitting and qualifying the Saints for the work of the ministry, but any member may engage in this service. And so may the president also toil in preaching the word in new sections, as do all the rest of the disciples, who are accomplished in this service; but to guide and preside in the deliberative assembly is another thing. Therefore the sentence that he who "longs after an overseers office he *desires* an excellent work," is aptly explained under

the plan of the Personal Ministry.

But when we come to manifest such a *desire* in the official ministry it would take a man with a sight of brass, and very little selfrespect to make such a desire known, for the exalted office of a bishop under the system of the official ministry would brand such as of base and sinister motives, and partaking of the worldly spirit of political office seekers.

Why, it has been observed that where brethren manifested a desire to merely exercise publically in the Gospel, say nothing of the honors of an office, that they were set down as aspiring and perhaps admonished of such a dangerous spirit, and to finish the job have the congregation to gossip about such as not being very bright.

If such are the results where no authority is asked what might be expected where one would manifest the desire of the high position and great power of the modern bishop! The political epithet of the world would be the nicest way to dispose

of such: call them cranks.

The plan of the Personal Ministry of the Gospel furnishes a demand for applicants to serve in the position as presidents, and the qualifications only is all that need be required of those who desired to descend into it. But owing to the slavery, might say too such must become it is not readily sought.

There are various other scriptures where reference is made to those who teach and preside in the assembly all of which beautifully apply themselves in the Personal Ministry. But these humble positions have been noticed here for the reason that the supporters of the official ministry of the Gospel invariably when writing and speaking upon the subject refer to those passages that relate to the office of an overseer or president in the deliberative assembly to support their doctrine.

The difference in the worldly and rude applications in referring to those scriptures to support the official method in power, and that of the harmonious and humble position

of service in the personal ministry is apparent ; but the misapplication of these scriptures is still more glaring, if not ridiculous when it is noted that not one of their bishops are even elected, but appointed to the office either by a hierarchy or by general consent and that it is another class of officers whom they elect to the ministry by the use of these scriptures for authority, thereby using evidence to prove and establish the right of a thing of which they themselves must admit has no existence.

Trust not in the creeds
By multitudes made
All motives not known.
Had they a righteous zeal,
The scriptures will reveal
By judgment of your own.

Church offices of power
End sad in the hour
When by intellegence spurned.
All forced to succumb
Good, bad and the dumb,
Righted only when overturned.

THE

Personal Ministry.

CHAPTER 1.

A PERSONAL COMMISSION.

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matt. 28: 19, 20.

In defending a new and benighted doctrine like this of the Personal Ministry of the Gospel, it is fortunate as well as a happy thought that the first passage of scriptures that may be quoted to support this doctrine is one so familiar, given under such impressive circumstances as the above.

Familiar as this passage is, yet

the authority for a personal ministry is almost universally overlooked. The deduction for this doctrine lies in the following words: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." *Whatsoever*, means evry thing taught.

Were not the twelve apostles commanded to go and preach the Gospel? Certainly they were. See Matt. 10: 5, 6, 7. Luke 9: 2. and Mark 3: 13, 14, 15. Then it follows that all disciples are commanded to preach the Gospel.

The Emphatic diaglotte also is plain upon this sentence; it reads; "Teaching them to observe all things which I have *enjoined* upon you." Preaching the Gospel was enjoined upon the apostles and of course by the commandment it is enjoined upon all disciples.

This text is the foundation of the Personal Ministry. From it the honest mind is forced to inquire what has been commanded or enjoined.

Not only is the doctrine of a personal ministry enjoined in this text but other things are taught in the

ministry of Christ that are overlooked by not placing the proper estimate upon this familiar but remarkable passage.

When the life and ministry of Christ and his apostles are read with the view of having enjoined upon us precisely what was enjoined upon the apostles, there are new ideas impressed, of which the personal ministry is one; the time of setting up the kingdom another; church government, nonresistance and many other instances will come prominently before us.

It has been argued that an official ministry was enjoined in the selection of the twelve apostles.

Evidently the apostles were not selected to exemplify selection to the ministry. They were selected to be witnesses. Luke 24:47,48. John 15:27. Acts 1:8,22. and 2:32. And according to the commission they were to enjoin upon all just what they witnessed. Having them to become witnesses, prepared them that *He might* send them forth to preach, (Mark 3:14.) and enjoin all commandments upon them which in turn were to be

enjoined upon all.

To argue that the Lord selected twelve to exemplify and enjoin election of ministers, with the same logic it could be argued that twelve, no more nor less should always be elected; since this also was included in the example. And then to carry out the example in full, elections should always take place in a mountain for there is where the Savior called his twelve.

To fulfill those expedient means and measures that occurred with Christ and the apostles in establishing his church in the world, it would be necessary when we keep the Lords supper, always to send two disciples to engage a room, and prepare the supper. It should always be an upper room, and always have the number twelve to partake of it.

If the selection of the twelve may be reasoned as being done to exemplify the official ministry we may reason all this, and very many other things. It would be right to have a representative of Jesus Christ himself, even after the manner of some sects, have a Pope or a Brigham

Young and prophet Joseph Smith. This is all consistent reasoning when an official ministry is based upon the selection of the apostles.

The position that an official ministry is exemplified in the Lord selecting twelve disciples, leads into direct opposition to the truth.

They were chosen that they might accompany the Lord, that He might send them forth to proclaim. Proclaim what? Proclaim that the Lord selected twelve and enjoined election? Why didn't they do it then? But it was not for this purpose that they were selected. It was for to proclaim all things whatsoever they witnessed while in the Lords company and had enjoined upon them, and in addition to this, it was, when the Lord was ready to depart from this world, enjoined upon the twelve to enjoin the same upon every other disciple, placing all followers of Christ into the same position as the apostles, when the Lord truly could say: "And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Quite different from that of being chosen to exemplify electinos to the minis-

try. They never witnessed any such a thing but they were taught, and witnessed the very reverse Mark, 9: 38, 39.

They were no more to preach, nor could they any more consistently preach, that they were selected and that others should be selected, than they could preach that some of the disciples should be selected for witnesses as were the apostles, when they had never beheld the things that they had. But recollect it was enjoined upon the apostles, and that by Christ himself, that the witnesses themselves should testify and propagate what they witnessed and enjoin the same upon all.

It was not enjoined upon the apostles to propagate either elections or that of witnesses, in fact it is impossible to do this; they come to be the twelve specially called because of the occupation and humble disposition that they had, and because it was the will and plan of God to establish the kingdom in the hearts of mankind by the method of selecting twelve men to be witnesses "of all that Jesus began both

to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after that He, through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen; (Acts 1:1, 2.) And one of them commandments, in particular was, to enjoin upon all, all things whatsoever was enjoined upon them.

That this selection was for the purpose to witness the life and acts of the Savior, is evident also from the knowledge that was required of those who were nominated to fill the place of Judas. Note that scripture; it reads: "It is necessary therefore, that from these having associated with us all the time in which the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, begining from the immersion of John to the day on which he was taken up from us. One of these become with us a witness of his resurrection." Acts 1: 21, 22.

This is evidence, direct, that the selection of the twelve apostles was to witness all the acts, conversations, and commandments in the ministry of the Lord. All of which corresponds with the last injunction

made upon the apostles that they should go and disciple all nations, teaching them to observe all things enjoined upon them.

It was enjoined upon the apostles to have a Lords supper and communion ceremonies. But was this any more of an injunction upon them than that of going to preach the Gospel? Certainly not. Therefore we are guilty of neglect in that of instituting an official ministry that restricts and deprives the great portion of the church the exercise of this duty. It would be no more wrong to elect a few to exercise in, and enjoy the Holy service of the Lords supper and communion, as in that of the ministry of the Gospel.

It was enjoined upon the apostles that they "ought to wash one anothers feet." But if we may violate the commandment of preaching the Gospel we may also violate this ordinance. If there is no violation in the neglect of one there should be none in the other.

Some people do not believe in washing feet in the church, but contend that it is a household duty,

deducting this manner of observance from the Jewish ceremonies and customs. This is just where educated divines say the official ministry is based. According to this kind of reasoning the household practice of feetwashing is all right also, for it is no more wrong to deduct or add to the Word of God in one respect than in the other. But that we do not appear guilty before God it is advisable that we do not add nor diminish in either case.

The apostles were commanded to put up the sword; "for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." But if we may violate one why not the other? If there is no sin to violate one, there should be none in the other.

Nearly all christian professors however believe that it is right to unsheath the sword and slay their fellowman upon the field of battle. This is a horrible thing for a professor of the Prince of Peace to do, say nothing of the guilt of violating the commandment of God. But this wholesale murder comes to pass, (at least in modern times) but once in

a long while. But those thus perishing comes from the violation of Gods Word, and the numbers thus perishing has been estimated and is very great. But have we formed an idea of the numbers that perish through the institution of an official ministry, that curtails the promulgation of the Gospel by discouraging the command of a personal ministry? Infinitely more it is presumable perish through the violation of the latter than that of the former. In fact perishing both temporal and spiritual may be in a great measure laid at the door of the corrupt institution of an official ministry of the Gospel.

But it is urged that the Gospel is being preached, being enjoined upon some. Then why not select a few upon whom to enjoin those other commandments? Why not select a few to repent and be baptized for the many? A few to enjoy the supper and communion, a few to wash feet, and a few to practice the doctrine of nonresistance? If it is not wrong to do one thing by representation, it should not be

wrong in another. There would no more liberty be assumed in such a disposition of these commandments than is assumed by the official ministry in the command of preaching and teaching the Gospel: For all these commands are brought under the same head, commanded by the same authority, and disposed of in the same manner.

Again it is said, that the work of the ministry is of such great spiritual importance that none but the most spiritually minded, and such by choice, should exercise in the ministry of the Gospel. But are not those other commandments equally as sacred? And might they not require the same plea to be exercised in only by the more pious and spiritually minded? Certainly those other ordinances are equally as sacred as that of the ministry. And since it would be considered an outrage upon the Word and humanity to thus judge and discriminate in the keeping of these commandments the same opinion may be formed about the institution of an official ministry.

Again it is urged, and truthfully too, that there is too much indifference upon the part of the members to engage in the ministry. That indifference, ignorance and incompetence prevails among the great body of Christians can't be denied. But this is no excuse to exempt from this duty and institute and support an official ministry. Nay, the existence of such indifference, ignorance and incompetence argues to put away the corrupt institution of an official ministry by which the spiritual life of Christians is destroyed. The institution of an official ministry is to blame for these spiritual defects.

Where duty is enjoined upon a person, there will his interest be; there will he not only be found engaged physically but mentally as well. If approached upon the subject of his employment he will converse freely and intelligently, and sensible advice and information relative to any subject is always sought from those who labor in the calling upon which information is desired. Mark this.

When a person goes down into

the pocket to pay another to attend duties for him that he is taught not to be able, nor the proper person to perform them, of course that exempts him from that service. Precisely after this manner it is in our Christian profession. If we are taught to believe that religion is purchasable, or exempt from the personal propagation of the Gospel, of course other callings and that of money-making follows. And therefore it is the invention of an official ministry that urges and cultivates this manifest indifference and incompetence upon the part of the so-called laity in serving each other in the ministry of the gospel.

The tactics also employed by the jealous church officers are most complete to discourage the great liberty of the Gospel, and bring themselves into admiration. This is contrived in the assumed liberties that are extended in public prayer in the assembly or in the prayer meeting, having the inexperienced, and liable to embarrassment to engage in this most sacred work in which the most complete controul and composure of

mind should by all means be possessed. Self-aggrandizement of the public official is sure to follow when the blundering and stammering prayers are ended and those offering them mortified.

Such a course reminds one of a conceity and jealous master mechanic that is afraid of an impression obtaining that somebody else knows as much as himself. Accordingly he keeps a lot of hands scoreing and hewing timber for him but is very careful never to let any one use the line, the plummet or the square and the scratch awl, then about once a week he will unlock his tool chest, set out his finest tools and propose five minutes each to his raw hands to cut and fit some fine and difficult architectural joint.

A few of the many evils of an official ministry are noted as follows:

Destroying the spiritual life of the members. The spreading of the Gospel hindered. Subjecting the spread of the Gospel to money-begging devices, Creation of classes, sects, self-righteousness, and church power.

CHAPTER 2.

THE PERSONAL MINISTRY
ENJOINED BY EXAMPLE.

THE LONE DISCIPLE.

"And John answered and said; Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us." Luke 9: 49, 50.

A record of this same transaction is found in Mark. 9: 38. 39.

That this was a disciple and true follower of the Lord, and acting in good faith and by the favor and spirit of God is proven by the circumstance recorded in Acts 19: 13 - 16. where some of the priests of the Jews undertook to cast out devils in the name of Jesus: "And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them and prevailed against them so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded."

This proves that the lone dis-

ciple acted by the spirit of Jesus, over which, the apostles themselves witness that they were forbidden by the Lord to exercise any authority.

These two incidents are also warning what sort of application is made of the lone disciple.

The custom that prevails among the factious sects of Christendom that this disciple prefigures some other sects, is not only perverting the principle of unity taught in the scriptures, but is doing wrong toward the Holy Spirit itself.

The apostles were the witnesses of Jesus, and here is a circumstance in which they are personally implicated, and witness something that seems to be against them, for they are commanded to cease to do a thing that they did do. Now it is readily understood what that was when the verses preceeding the text are studied.

Without quoting those scriptures it is necessary here to say that all that lead up to this answer of John was, simply, what kind of a church power, or church government as it is called, they would have,

and who should be the greatest in it.

When the transactions previous to this answer of John is studied it is noticed that the discussion among the disciples about who should be the greatest was the cause of a child, being by the Saviour, set up in their midst to illustrate the disposition of the kingdom of heaven. But John who was very frank in admission as well as a desire to have a perfect understanding, answered to this marvelous disposition illustrated by the Saviour with the child, as it is found in the text.

The astonishment and disappointment in this illustration may readily be imagined. Hence the pointed answer of John as indicated in the text. The result is known in the reply of Jesus that they should not forbid him.

Here is a case direct on the point of the personal ministry of the Gospel, witnessed by the apostles, being literally exemplified and justified by Christ himself.

If the apostles were not witnesses in this case to instruct us respecting the will of heaven upon this subject, then it might be said they

were no witnesses in any other case recorded in the Gospel. But all must admit that they were witnesses in this case as well as in all other acts and scenes that came under their observation while in the company of Christ.

If then the apostles were witnesses in this case there follows another deduction, and that is that this case did not occur as an accident, but transpired in order that it should be witnessed and recorded for a purpose equally as important as any other word that "proceeded out of the mouth of God."

It is hardly possible to imagine a better opportunity than this one for the Saviour to teach the doctrine of the official ministry had it been intended to be taught. A few words in reply from the Master to the effect that this disciple was out of the regular order of appointment to this service, and that it was right to forbid him the liberty assumed, would have established the idea of an official ministry. But was it done? No, the very opposite was forever fixed and established.

It has been urged that this disciple only worked myracles, and did not promulgate the Gospel. This indicates that somebody is very nigh to the conviction of the truth of this scripture. Somebody has about spent his force with arguments to get rid of this Scripture and sustaining the cause of an official ministry. To meet this arguement it is not necessary to note more than the fact that the myracles were done in the *name* of the Lord; this required the promulgation of the Gospel of the Lord.

Another brother has argued that this was no disciple, basing his arguments on the words; *He followeth not with us*. But if that made him no disciple why did the apostles complain? Had this disciple followed them there would have been no complaint. But, him not following them and a complaint to this effect proves him a disciple. This *not following them*, then means that he was acting independently, and without a regular official call as the apostles thought it should be, and just as the "mystery of iniquity" later on established it.

This disciple was pursuing the very course commanded in the great commission. What case could have been made that would more perfectly accord with that command? The *commission* therefore is exemplified and an unmistakable injunction placed upon the apostles in this incident.

For he that is not against us is for us. There is a volume on church-government couched in this sentence and the preceeding sentence of the child set up in their midst. But all that can be said here upon this subject, is, that the mysterious character of the kingdom of God, forces men either to be for or against the Lord, without, — as the Lord instructs the disciples here, — church trials on the part of the disciples.

This mystery lies in the great difference between the spirit that the children of God are under and that which rules the children of this world. The former need never attack the latter in order to keep the kingdom undefiled. Though the spirit of this world may exist visibly in the congregation it will continue but

for a short time until it will attack the true order, bring in the "divisions" and separate by the worldly method of expelling, leaving the truth in greater splendor in the world. Throughout the history of the Christian church it is noticed that the true followers of Christ always were expelled. Why, the iniquity of this official business in those who "love to have the preeminence" is fully exemplified and plainly recorded in the case of Diotrophes, (3 John 9, 10.) where he cast the brethren out of the church for receiveing the brethren whom he had expelled, and it is quite plain that the apostle John himself was one of the expelled. This shows just what poor fallen man will attempt where there is an opening to preeminence and authority through an office of authority. The Lord never brought anything of the kind to us. But the very reverse is established,—always to be beat. It is wicked to count gain for Godliness.

For he that is not against us is for us. This is wonderful and significant language of the peculiar disposition of the kingdom of God. No doubt

it was a disappointment to the twelve, since power and authority by a systematic government with positions, the object they so much sought after, was plainly set at naught.

A DISCIPLE COMMANDED

"And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." Luke 9: 59, 60.

Here it is noticed that a disciple is, without any election or special appointment commanded to go and preach the kingdom of God.

Why did this circumstance occur? Reasonably it may be concluded, in the first place, because they were all impressed with the honor, liberty and importance of preaching the Gospel. Taking all together it is quite reasonable that the Savior discoursed upon the subject and that the above proposition, and some others that are connected were the results of the impression made upon the disciples.

In the second place, this case came

to pass, was witnessed by the apostles and recorded that it might be, according to the Saviours last command to the Twelve, be enjoined upon all that the Gospel is to be promulgated by all, and that no man or set of men should set themselves up to dictate who may and who may not labor in the ministry of the Gospel.

What should be thought of men who profess to be learned in the scriptures, yet in the face of such testimonies continue the practice of an official ministry, and urge, without reason that they constitute no testimony for the personal ministry? Or, what should be thought of those who dispose of them by saying, "The lord had the power to appoint then, the church has it now." This is a very deceptive conclusion. The church has no power but that which was exemplified by Christ and witnessed by the apostles. The structure of official church government and power is built upon such unwarranted conclusion.

THE SEVENTY SENT FORTH

"After these things the Lord appoint-

ed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into evry city and place, where he himself would come." Luke 10: 1.

This would have been a grand opportunity to teach and exemplify the doctrine of an elected ministry. All that would have been necessary to establish it, would have been a consultation with the apostles and an election held, or simply sent by an official approvement would have established it. But this was not done. They were sent out to preach without the slightest hint that the apostles were consulted. or regarded, or had anything to do in the mattter.

AFTER THESE THINGS *the Lord sent out OTHER seventy*, After what things? No doubt the things that are recorded in the previous chapter that connects with the subject of having men to engage in preaching the Gospel. Were there such? There were. What are they like? They are to the effect that though the apostles sought power and authority to have men officially commissioned to preach, it was forbidden them both by precept and example.

Now the twelve being the witnesses for Jesus, they witness to us in this instance that men shall not assume the authority of creating an office and officially appoint men to the ministry of the Gospel, But that the Holy Ghost which operates in the congregation instead of Christ teaches and sends men forth in this work.

Therefore for any one or set of men to assume to elect or otherwise appoint men to the ministry of the Gospel, assumes greater liberties than those given to the apostles, and are setting themselves up equal if not above that of Christ, for, in the official system but a certain few are sent and the rest are prohibited, but in this instance all were sent, evidently, because He said unto them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest."

An exception perhaps should be made here about *all* being sent. At least all were sent who were sufficiently instructed and were able and could leave home and could labor in the promulgation of the Gospel. The disci-

ples then as well as now required instructions to qualify them to be able to execute this mission. The Savior was a *teacher* as well as a *preacher*, —“ And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his disciples, he departed thence to *teach* and to *preach* in their cities.” Matt. 11: 1.

Again, “And it came to pass, that on these days as he *taught* the people in the temple, and *preached* the Gospel the chief priest and the scribes came upon him with the elders.” Luke 20: 1.

The reasonable conclusion here is, that this teaching consisted in having the people becoming interested and qualified in propagating the Gospel, for in no case, neither in art, science or literature does a teacher teach but that the object is to raise the pupil to do or to execute that which is taught. The official ministry does not even come down to good common public sense.

It is not only like the modern worldly association but is one of the oldest of this character and may be considered the most sinful. This is meant: Men of a craft form into an as-

sociation for mutual benefits and protection. These are "trust" and "monopolies" that watch with zeal and secrecy the interest of their craft. These are selfish and wrong, but the ministerial association is the worst of all, because it monopolizes the Gospel rights of all. Worldly "trusts" and associations count their mutual protection by 'freezing out,' *business schemes*. The Lord never established any such business methods in the Gospel.

The Lord taught publically; Why not privately in resorts to private places with the disciples apart from the multitudes? Mark 6:31, 32. Luke 9:10.

John taught his disciples how to pray, The apostles being aware of this requested therefore the Lord to teach them also how to pray. Luke 11:1. Prayer is the more sacred engagement: Why conclude that they were not taught to preach?

CHAPTER 3

THE ELECTION OF MATTHIAS

ACTS 1: 15-26.

The election of Matthias is a prominent argument invariably referred to,

to support the doctrine of election to the ministry.

It should not be out of place here to notice this incident and disabuse the mind of this error.

There are several arguments to show that this incident is not applicable to sustain the innovated practice of an elected clergy.

The apostles were appointed to travel, two in company, to witness the Gospel and Resurrection of Christ, and they found that the incident of Judas was foretold probably a thousand years before, (Acts 1: 20) and the apostles at that time being able to select a witness to all that transpired from the baptism of John, (Acts 1: 22) set forth two men of such prominence, and chose one of these by lot; having for their authority the prophesy only.

It should also be noticed that this election occurred after the death of Christ and before the Holy Ghost descended, making it a case by authority of the prophesy, and does not come under the commandments of Christ and the Holy Ghost. This election would never have occurred had it not been

found in the prophecy. It therefore appears very odd and inapplicable to refer to this instance for a precedent to support an official ministry.

The conclusion is also irrefutable but that Matthias, upon whom the lot fell to take the charge of Judas, was a minister previous to this appointment. The argument upon which this is based is that he was one of the Seventy sent out by Christ himself. This is very fair to presume since he had to be one known to all things from the baptism of John until that time. The only chance possible that Matthias was not sent out with the Seventy is that he was a very stupid man and not competent to be sent out with the Seventy. Note the demand for laborers. "Then said he unto them, the harvest truly is great but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest". Think of it, Matthias being present;—*known to all things*, and yet not worthy to be sent!

There is no reasonable doubt but that Matthias was a public minister of the Gospel previous to his appoint-

ment to the apostleship, and is weak if not ignorant to refer to this incident as a precedent for the appointment of ministers to preach the Gospel.

What might not be proven if permission, after this manner is taken in the Scripture? It would be easy to prove it right to take interest. Matt. 25:27. Easy to prove that it is right to oppress the poor and give to the rich. Matt. 23:28, 29. Music and dancing would be sanctioned by the Divine Word. Luke 15: 25. All the Roman Catholics, Mohammedans, Mormans and Protestants could be said belong to the fold of Christ. John 10: 16.

And as it is noticed in the case under consideration, they did in reality not elect at all, but gave forth their *lots*, and therefore it would be right to support and patronize lotteries, and indulge in all sorts of games in chance, because Joseph and Matthias gave forth their lots in chance. And of course permitting such perversions of particular incidents in the Scriptures there would be also a precedent for electing or appointing

men for the ministry.

And they gave forth thetr lots. They did not elect or appoint at all in the case under consideration. The apostles even themselves did not dare to assume such authority. They left it to the chances in a lot, and therefore the friends of an official ministry base their authority upon a wrong impression and through it set themselves up and assume greater authority than the apostles themselves, in being more competent to judge what men should exercise in the ministry, all of which they will not own nor want to be guilty of.

CHAPTER 4.

ALL THE DISCIPLES ARE SHEPHERDS.

"But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." John 10: 2

There are four different shepherds referred to in John 10: 1 - 18. One is Christ the Good Shepherd Verses 11-14. The Good Shepherd gives his life for the sheep, and He knows his sheep and the sheep know him. What a consolation for the disciples that they may, without guessing, know when

they are in favor with God.

Another kind of Shepherds are such as had "come before" the Good Shepherd. This does not refer to either any false christs or the prophets, but to those who took upon themselves without precept or example to be the legal guides of the people, and quite likely had created and set themselves up in man-made offices. Such shepherds are mentioned in Isa 56: 10, 11. Jer. 23: 1, 2. and 50: 6. Zech. 11: 3-5. In verse 7 they are called *idol shepherds*.

In these references, no doubt to act the part of a shepherd was all right enough, but there are all probabilities that they created an office of the work and the out-come was that they made themselves worthy to be called "thieves and robbers."

A third kind of shepherds that are designated is the hireling. This may also be the same kind of shepherds as came *before Him*, since "they all look to their own way, evry one for his gain from his quarter." Isa. 56: 11. But such have also been ever since Christ; illegal shepherds set up who have their own way, divide the flock

and have everything systematized on a corrupt money basis and worked by missionary societies. All this business is created for self aggrandizement of a corrupt official ministry and is all denounced by the Good Shepherd.

Another kind of shepherds are those indicated in the text, which has all to assume the charge of a shepherd. The office which always degrades poor weak fallen man and always gets him and all over whom he pretends to rule into trouble, is here left out. What a good plan this is! If the present self-made shepherds could only get the consent of their officious spirits to submit to the beauty of this equality here taught; and on the other hand, if the laity (so-called) could shake off the lethargy into which they have been thrust by the corrupt official idea that is being taught; what reforms we would be surprised with in such an event!

The original reads "But he that entereth in by the door is A shepherd of the sheep." The A in original is not any more stronger in support of the personal responsibility in entering the sheepfold, but is plainer. All the

difference is, in the use of the word *A shepherd*; it does not leave near the room to argue that only some who enter are THE shepherds of the sheep.

And so much the more has it been necessary to notice this in the original, since in a wreckless way some have actually cited John 10: 2 as authority for regularly elected shepherds of the sheep. Either, however should be plain enough; But when every one entering in by the door is made A shepherd of the sheep, it leaves the supporters of an official ministry in rather a ridiculous light, for, if all who enter in by the door are officers, their laity is obliged to climb in some other way.

There appears but one seeming difficulty in this disposition of the text, that is, how all could be shepherds and at the same time be the sheep? This may be illustrated by the following:

A number of citizens in a town keep all their money in a bank that is located in their midst. They hear of the invasion of robbers; and to protect their treasures evry citizen is armed and is made a guard of the bank. Now

in this instance all the citizens of the bank are the guards or keepers of the Citizens Bank. In this same sense may the sheep be the shepherds in the parable under consideration.

But in the arrangement of guards to keep the citizens wealth in the bank it would be necessary to appoint one man as a president of the citizens to keep order and necessities on hand and see that all are supplied, and in addition appoint him also an assistant to see that all necessary attention is given to the demands of the society. This serves to illustrate the services of elders and deacons as taught in the scriptures, of which more will be noticed hereafter.

CHAPTER 5.

DISCIPLES WENT EVERYWHERE PREACHING THE WORD.

"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word". Acts 8: 4.

Language more positive would be difficult to form for testimony to support the doctrine of a personal ministry. There is in fact no such a thing

as getting around this. And that which makes it still more positive regarding the perpetuation of this doctrine as taught and exemplified by the Savior is the *time* when this "scattering" took place: being in the year A. D. 34 and therefore after the day of Pentecost.

This ought to stop the mouths of those who harp on the idea that previous to the day of Pentecost things were in a sort of chaos, but on and after the day of Pentecost the general order in all things for the church was established. This instance therefore occurring after the day of Pentecost adds confusion to discomfiture to the supporters of the official ministry, in prooveing their cause more wrong and inconsistent than ever.

The DISCIPLES went everywhere preaching the Word. What a pity it was not *officers* or the *apostles* that were scattered! What an evidence this would have been by which to support the official cause! Though it would be but an inference were it stated that "elects" or officials were scattered and went preaching every where, such evidence would, with the

popularity of the custom, out weigh a half dozen of those plain testimonies that are against this man-made custom and usage. But again to the complete discomfiture of the official doctrine, "they were all scattered abroad throughout the region of Judea and Samaria EXCEPT the apostles." Acts 8: 1. Those upon whom it would be looked to base this official authority are being left out.

And this is not all that is learned from the instance of the disciples being scattered abroad. In recording these things the Spirit did not neglect to give sufficient account of this incident so that no mistake could possibly be made, in understanding a sanction of the doctrine of the personal ministry.

In Acts 11: 19-23 a further account is made of those who were scattered abroad, and the success consequent upon this persecution. They "traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus and Antioch." Cyprus is an island in the Mediterranean sea. Phenice is a long strip of land lying along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean sea. Either being from 250 to 300 miles

from Jerusalem. Antioch is still farther, probably 350 miles.

From these great distances from Jerusalem, and the strange doctrine that they preached, and territory over which they spread an idea may readily be formed that some years passed untill the Gospel was preached and established among the Greeks at these great distances. According to this is the record. It was not untill A. D. 42; eight years after the persecution, "when tidings of these things, (that is that the Gospel was effectually preached at these great distances,) came unto the ears of the church which was at Jerusalem." Acts 11:22. Think of it! All this being done without the authority or even the knowledge of the church at Jerusalem, the first, and probably the only established congregation before they, who were scattered abroad and done this great work.

And still more strange, before they knowed anything about the knowledge imparted to Peter by the vision that he had that the Jentiles were to be partakers of the Gospel. Is this not strange? The idea that the Gospel was spread over this vast territory

and to such great distances, and to the Greeks even before Peter was convinced that they were to have any part in the Gospel, and above all, without the knowledge of the church at Jerusalem, is decidedly adverse and most remarkable to consider in its contrast with the idea of propagating the Gospel by official methods and the church organizations, and demonstrates the power of the Spirit and the plan and ability of God to operate independently of those worldly methods so corrupt and full of temptation and which mortal man is all the time working himself into.

The conclusion that no regard should be paid to official organization is still further made evident from the fact that the congregation at Jerusalem took such an active part and interest in the "tidings of these things" that "they sent forth Barnabas that he should go as far as Antioch." Acts 11:22.

The mission of Barnabus, and what he done is stated in Acts 11:23-26, where it is learned that he neither preached or baptized nor organized them, but "exhorted them all, that

with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord," which was all that he could do when he "had seen the grace of God." Whether this was all that the church expected is not stated; but there is a possibility that the church sent Barnabas to look after this thing perhaps with the foreign idea of organizing them, but when he had seen the grace of God he departed to seek Saul of Tarsus. What for; to elect preachers and organize them? No, but to teach them. Verse 26. Teach what? Teach just what the Savior taught, exemplified and commanded the twelve apostles to observe and teach. The personal ministry *included*.

The account of this scattering of the disciples exposes the imposition of an official ministry and their regular church organizations. Was it even as some urge that they had the Seventy who were authorized by the Lord, along with them, to attend to election and organization; then the Seventy themselves are justifiably chargeable to this innovation of corruption, for, if the Gospel is only, as they say, propagated by official organization it should have had its "beginning at Je-

rusalem." Luke 24: 47. But official organization evidently had its beginning away from Jerusalem and worked eight years, the apostles and the church at Jerusalem being ignorant of this new invention introduced by the Seventy, somewhere, perhaps a hundred miles or more from Jerusalem. Would this not have been a wicked violation by the Seventy of the command of Christ? But it is not necessary to lay such premises. The right thing to do is for official supporters first to point out in the Scriptures where the Seventy elected officers and organized churches before such a wicked innovation is charged upon them.

Oh, officious mortal man, come down and seek the level of the Holy apostles and prophets of God!

CHAPTER 6.

EVEN JOHNS DISCIPLES PREACHED WITHOUT ELECTION.

Apollos never was elected to the ministry according to the "order of the church," and yet he "spake boldly in the synagogue," at the same time. "Know-

ing only the baptism of John." Acts 18: 24-28.

According to the modern method he would have been counseled to keep quiet until the Lord would call him to the ministry by the church. But to the contrary, Aquilla and Priscilla took him unto them and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly, and then the brethren wrote exhorting the disciples to receive him. Not one word being mentioned here; nor in any other passage noticed, about "electing" or "installing" the disciples in the office of the ministry.

The brethren wrote exhorting the disciples to receive him, showing that brethren were present, and that it was not a case of emergency where no number of disciples were present that a election might be had. No, but all that was necessary was more full instruction in the word and recommendation so that he would not be hindered in the prosecution of the work he had been engaged in.

There has been a disposition on the part of some to evade the doctrine of the personal ministry as taught and exemplified by the Savior; saying, that

the church afterward regulated these things. Now, were this a fact, would it not be expected that Apollos should have been regulated in this matter? A man from far-off Alexandria, knew nothing but the baptism of John, and that probably second handed; had probably heard of Christ but never seen him; comes among the brethren, preaches Christ but was not fully instructed about him; a man and his wife instruct him and the brethren give him a letter of recommendation and through all this not a single question is raised about his authority to preach. Now, if the Lords precepts and examples hardly count for authority upon the doctrine of a personal ministry, it should by all means be expected in the case of Apollos appearing among the disciples and knowing only the baptism of John that he should have been regularly elected and this order so recorded if any such order was intended to be instituted in the church.

And that which makes it still so much worse for the cause of an official institution is the date at which Apollos appeared to the brethren, being

A. D. 55, more than twenty years after the day of Pentecost. Think of it! And the church still not regulated officially. Would it not seem about time to abandon this church power idea, and except the plain teaching of Christ and his Holy and humble servants?

TWELVE BRETHREN PREACHED
IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIVING
BAPTISM.

In Acts 19: 1-7, right in connection with Apollos' case is recorded a similar case where twelve of Johns disciples assumed the duty of preaching immediately after their baptism. This occurred as late as the year A. D. 56. In this second obligation received by these disciples in their baptism is exemplified the power of the Spirit which the Lord promised to send, and corresponds exactly with the precepts and examples of the Lord respecting the personal ministry of the Gospel.

If this testimony is rejected on the ground that it was in the days of the apostles, and when Christianity was miraculously established; all the Scriptures might be rejected. This is the road to infidelity and that of ig-

noring everything, for, on the same ground might all other testimonies be rejected that are precedents for the perpetuation of Christianity. Yes, and if we desire also to have a form of Christianity without any authority, such a disposition is all that is necessary. There would be sufficient room for liberty and license to fabricate anything outside the apostolic age; even after the manner of the business of making ministerial offices and create the distinction of a clergy from the laity, evidently as it has been done by those men who desire this worldly preeminence over their fellowman.

CHAPTER 7.

ALL HAVE AN OFFICE.

"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Rom. 12: 4-5.

Here it is definitely stated that all members have an office. There is no getting around this statement. The only thing that remains to be decided

is what those offices consisted in. These are enumerated in verses 6, 7, 8, as follows; Prophesying, ministering, teaching, exhortation and ruling. Exercising in these gifts in the congregation constitutes the demands of a personal ministry, and this is just what the official denies and has destroyed.

In addition to these gifts should be added however those other gifts that the apostles has enumerated at other places;—Different languages, gifts of healing, myracles, helps, governments, &c. These all are called spiritual gifts, but it is reasonable to conclude that while they are such it is the Spirit that opperates upon the diversified mental dispositions that are observable in the human family, and when man comes to be obedient to the Gospel the Spirit urges all members into action in there natural mental powers and dispositions.—1Cor. 12:11.

These diversified mental dispositions might be illustrated by a community building a public house. In the society are found quarry men, masons, carpenters, helpers and architects. These will all fall into their proper

places and line of work if not interfered with by organization and election, and bosses set up over them that desired to run everything but understood nothing of the different talents, and have all to work promiscuously in the different callings according to their own planning.

Just as the work naturally would be carried on in the building of a house with different talents, dispositions and constitutions, so is the work on the great building of the Gospel, which the apostle is teaching in the subject under consideration. The talent employed in each are of the same origin. The "wise masterbuilder," (1 Cor. 3: 10) even himself, did not assume to dictate how and what man shall build there upon or what position to occupy.

Just as the regular order of talents may be interfered with literally so also may they be crippled, dwarfed and disordered spiritually by man's innovation of "systematic organization," as they call it, and destroy the very things that the Lord and his apostles taught, exemplified and set up.

The disposition that may be re-

quired, and even demanded here to furnish support for an official ministry of the Gospel would make the supporters of the doctrine themselves ashamed. If the apostles, in verse 1, would have said, "Now we beseech your *ministers*," instead of *brethren*; or in verse 3, "For I say through the grace given unto me to every *minister* among you," instead of *every man*; and then in verse 4 would read, "and all *ministers* have not the same office," instead of all *members*; and then followed, as the apostles did, in verse 6, 7, 8, with the admonishment to exercise in those mental gifts in the congregation the conclusion of an elected or appointed ministry would be irrefutable. But as it stands upon the record the supporters of the personal ministry may everlastingly defy the combined creeds of modern Christendom that support the usurpation of an official ministry.

Another note that should be made here is that the epistle to the Romans was not written until nearly thirty years after the ministry of Christ. It can therefore not be said that those things in the ministry of Christ were

only in the beginning, but was different after the day of Pentecost. What a deceptive falsehood this is! Respecting the doctrine under consideration how could there be a more perfect agreement? Here the apostle admonishes them to learn and improve their talents, to be diligent in their offices, "have the same care one for another," (1 Cor. 12:25) which corresponds precisely with the doctrine of the Savior as taught and exemplified to and by the Twelve, and afterwards continued in the providences of God in the persecution that followed the martyrdom of Stephen; the case of Apollos, and the twelve disciples, all of which is voiced in the words of the golden text; *Teaching them to observe all things which I have enjoined upon you*

WHAT PROPHESYING IS.

It is necessary here to notice what is meant by the word, *prophesying*. Mr. Barnes in his Notes on Rom. 13: 6, makes a most reasonable explanation as follows:

"The verb from which this word (prophesying) is derived properly means to predict *future events*, but it

also means to declare the divine will; to interpret the purpose of God; or to make known in any way the truth of God. Its first meaning is to *predict* or *foretell* future events; but as those who did this were messengers of God, and as they commonly connected with such *predictions* instruction and exhortation in regard to the sins, the dangers, and the duties of men, the word came to denote *any* who warned or threatened, or in any way communicated the will of God."

This is a very reasonable explanation of the word, which also it demanded, being in different places in the scriptures classed with other gifts that are to be exercised in by the members of the congregation. So far as this being a miraculous calling and belonging to the apostolic age; upon the same ground all the other gifts enumerated by the apostle could be discarded. Supporting this gift in its secondary meaning supports the perpetuation of those other miraculous gifts in their secondary application. And if the miraculous gifts are thus perpetuated why should not all those other gifts and offices that had no di-

rect miraculous meaning?

CHAPTER 8

ALL HAVE SPIRITUAL GIFTS;— FIRST CORINTHIANS TWELFTH CHAPTER.

In verse 1 the apostle speaks about those who are spiritual. The word *gifts* is supplied. The evidence of those who are spiritual and those who are not is taught in verses 2, 3.

In verse 4 is taught, that, although all are spiritual, the gifts in those who are spiritual are various, but of the same spirit, conclusively showing that every one who is spiritual has a gift.

So also in verse 5, a variety of services but the same Lord. And in verse 6 a variety of operations but the same Lord.

All teaches us that all the members of the church are spiritual and truly converted when turned away from the idolatry of the world. But while this is the case there can not, and shall not any model or kind of work be prescribed in which members are to exercise their talents, and that

in this freedom and variety of labor they are still governed by the same spirit.

But now in order that there is no misunderstanding it is stated in verse 7 to whom and what for these things are thus given, Viz; *to each one*, and for the *benefit of all*. The common version reads; "to every man to profit withal." This is a mistake. This is very necessary to correct. There is a vast difference in those individual gifts being given for the *benefit of all* or solely for the profit of the individual who possesses the gift.

This is another one of those instances where obscurity seems to be designed, for if closely noticed the personal ministry is here taught; for all may benefit in their gifts being exercised in the assembly. Quite a difference from the unreasonable conclusion that while the members of the church have gifts differing they are to sit down in a silent and private life and profit themselves by them.

This seems to be an important subject, for it seems that the apostle, to make sure that the subject could not be misunderstood, enumerates in

verses 8, 9, 10, the different gifts that members may and will exercise in. Then in verse 11 everything is again closed up in the specific statement that all these things performs the one and the same spirit, *distributing to each in particular* as it will,

Now it is a fair question, and one that both the clergy and laity should be impressed with, how these golden talents will be brought into active service in the congregation so long as the practice of selecting, giving audience and support to the foreign innovation of an official ministry is continued?

All should know that do not know that it takes considerable practice, and that for years sometimes, until a gift is developed and a cultured controll of the thoughts and there expression is established; in this is where the *apt teachers* and *elders* would find employment for their talents: Teachers, who could fill the command of the Lord to Peter, who could furnish food for thought both to old and young.—John 21: 15, 16, 17. Elders, who, with a blameless character and impartial presiding.

could command the respect of all. This indeed would be, according to the Savior, servants and slaves of all. Such a course however can never be expected so long as an official ministry is countenanced and supported.

But continuing in the chapter under consideration, there is but one great thought impressed in verses 11-24. That is equality. This is taught in the tempering of the body literally so that all the members have equal honor, and applying the same to the various gifts and callings that are all to be equally honored in the spiritual body. Then in verse 25 the apostle again speaks so definitely that the meaning of all that is taught in the chapter can not be mistaken, Viz ; "That there should be no divisions in the body ; but that the members should have the same care one for another."

Here again the common version is mistaken. It reads, no *schisms* in the body. The apostle does not treat on schisms when treating the subject of equality, but division by distinction in the body. The original makes sensible reading in the use of the word divisions.

Modern Christendom, in patterning after our Roman church fathers, is great on divisions of the body. All churches have divided the body more or less into the following divisions; "A full ministry;" "second degree ministry;" "first degree ministry;" and a "laity." Next comes the "ministerial meeting," and "teachers bible meeting," and above all the great Annual Meeting, where men of great distinction meet to make laws by which they are enabled to take care and govern the body. Does not such arrangements have one portion of the body to assume the care of the rest?

That there should be no division in the body: but that the members should have the same care one for another. The construction of this verse, and standing in the connection that it does; that of equality of rights in the public assembly; and harmony where those very different gifts are exercised, and over which the same care is given to every member, makes it self evident that reference was had to that of dividing the church into classes, such as clergy and laity, and all other distinctions that an offi-

cial ministry incubates and brings forth.

This corresponds exactly with the Saviors words in John 10:2; "But he that entereth in by the door is a shepherd of the sheep."

Again, the apostle writing what he did upon the spiritual gifts more than twenty five years after the ministry of Christ, proves also that the apostle carefully enjoined in this respect all that was enjoined upon them in the Commission.

Coming to the four last verses in the chapter under consideration, the first note in order is the ignorance that is displayed by those who refer to these verses to support the official ministry. The beginning and end of their argument may be summed up in these words; "Well, did not the apostle say that God set some in the church?" This is a sample of a great deal of scriptural argument these days. To pay respect to the Word of God a critical and honest examination should always be endeavored.

The original reads: "And those indeed God placed in the congregation, first apostles, second prophets, third

teachers, after that powers, then gracious gifts of cures, helpers, directors, different tongues." Verse 28.

Now, are not these gifts about the same as mentioned in verses 8, 9, 10, and elsewhere in the scriptures? Certainly they are. Why did the apostles enumerate them here? To tell us just what is learned in the next two verses,-- 29, 30: Viz., "All are not apostles; all are not prophets; all are not teachers; all are not powers; all have not gracious gifts of cures; all do not speak different languages; all do not interpret." Teaching us to stay by the variety of natural gifts and not fall into an error as great as that of an official ministry where every one is passed through a pair of moulds, and natural gifts destroyed. This fault is hinted at in verse 31; "But you earnestly desire the *more eminent gifts*, and yet a more excellent way I point out to you." The more eminent gifts coveted were the gracious miraculous gifts that had been given; such as the gifts of speaking in different languages. or that of foretelling future events which ceased with the apostolic age.

Now that this was the great object with them, that is, eminence in the miraculous gifts, it is only necessary to notice the connection in the next chapter, — 1 Cor. 13: 1. "If I should speak in the languages of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a noisy cymbal." Public speaking, and that in foreign languages was the matter here. Now see verse 2. "And if I have prophesy, and know all secrets and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains but have not love, I am nothing." Here again the secrets of prophesy is referred to; so that it is plainly seen why the subject is so fully discussed. The object being, not to set offices in the church but to have the individual membership of the church to respect natural gifts, and cease their longing after those gifts that were miraculous.

It should also be noticed here that there was also the miraculous gift of healing beside those of speaking in different languages and foretelling future events. But it was in the two latter that the disciples concerned

themselves in because it made them eminent in the public assembly since it was there that they were exercised, while that of healing applied itself more to private cases.

Noticing then that these miraculous gifts in speaking different languages and foretelling future events as well as literal healing had ceased, we may not therefore conclude that there is no gift in the study of different languages, none in the study of prophecy, nor any in healing: Upon this ground of reasoning the Holy Ghost itself could be reasoned out of existence since it has ceased to operate miraculously. Indeed Christ himself is no longer with us because he has ceased to be in the miraculous form of the flesh, all preaching and teaching would share the same fate because in the apostolic age all were moved in a miraculous way by the miraculous spirit of God. No, the scriptures do not admit of this kind of reasoning. The gift of different languages, of prophecy, and of healing is perpetuated in the same sense that we have Christ and the apostles and the Holy Ghost and all the other gifts that moved by the

miraculous impulse of the Spirit, that "divides to every man severally as He will."

God indeed set these in the church, but not for the purpose of having them to establish authority for an official ministry. It is quite a jump and a strained one at that, and that without consideration to land on such a conclusion.

It is here in order to note how these spiritual gifts apply themselves in the method of the official ministry and that of the personal ministry.

First the apostleship. There is but one way to have it, and that is in the exemplary sense; which consists in the recognition of all things whatsoever the Lord had enjoined upon the twelve. This, an official ministry does not recognize. It does not believe that public labor was enjoined upon all to the extent of talent. It does not believe that the injunction in the circumstance of the lone disciple come under the "*whatsoever*". Neither those other instances that were exemplified in those who were commanded to go and preach the kingdom, and the Seventy that were

sent without any counsel or consent of the apostles. That John 10: 2 does not mean what it says; and therefore, the official ministry has no such a thing in their church as apostles.

The personal ministry believes all things and therefore may lay claims as retaining the apostleship still in the congregation. And further it is believed that a practical test of the system will bring forth men as humble, possibly as great as the apostles themselves and perpetuate going out into the world with the good news and open up new territory, when others again may enter into their labors. This would practically fulfill the saying of the Lord; "And lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world." If the personal ministry does not produce such humble unassuming men who will go out and prevail with the truth then it may be set down that the personal ministry is as destitute of the apostleship in the church as the official.

Prophets. Since prophesying in the secondary sense means general instruction, it is granted that in this sense the official ministry fills this

place, but in a limited sense; because in the freedom given in the personal ministry the place would be filled in a more radical sense also. Men would arise that would apply themselves in the divine records that could foresee the "times and the seasons," and would, as it has no doubt been done in the ages past, forewarn disaster both general and also individual, that follows certain conditions and conduct. There is a gift in this kind of work in addition to that of solving the prophecies of the bible in which there are many dormant talents that will come forth into action in the abolishment of the official ministry.

Teachers. The official ministry claims to have them in their Sunday schools. The claim might be extended to their professors in their colleges also, but will only notice it in their own claim.

Their Sunday school is a separate assembly and the teachers that act in it never act in that capacity in the church. This is a division of the body, just what the apostle said in this chapter should not be. Therefore these Sunday school teachers are not

the scriptural teachers under consideration.

Again, the elders, (presidents as the original reads.) are to be chosen, apt teachers. These are never, in the official system, chosen from the Sunday school teachers, and therefore their own selfmade institution witnesses that they have not those scriptural teachers in the invention of a Sunday school teacher.

But when it comes to the personal ministry as prescribed by Christ and the apostles, those teachers have quite different labor to perform; consisting in giving their pupils subjects, with attending thoughts and proper language in their expression with a courteous demeanor in the public assembly. Here is a wide field of labor, and one of responsibility. Therefore the apostle says: "Do not many of you become teachers, my brethren knowing that we shall receive a severer Judgment." James 3: 1.

Miracles. In the figurative, and that in the limited sense, it should be admitted that the official ministry is filling the gift. This is done by carrying the Gospel in a miraculous way

into the hearts of aliens and strangers to grace. This gift is operated in the same marvelous way as that of prophesying. But notice: If the corrupt innovation of an official ministry with its monopolizing disposition and curtailing of force, beside what few there is of them, and such as are of them being called in a haphazard manner, regardless of talent; and operate so powerfully with a few seeds of truth; what might be expected if the golden talents were unearthed by the personal ministry and be blessed with the miraculous work of the spirit upon the human heart?

Yes, it is right to give proper credit to the official system where in their method, even if it is in a limited sense they fill these places, however corrupt and foreign the manufactured name of, "visiting brethren," and the distinguishing and heathenish names of a "first degree," and "second degree," and a "full ministry" sounds. Their worldliness and coarseness come only to the surface when contrasted with the beautiful arrangement of equality in the personal ministry.

To put it aright those higher de-

grees should be entitled "Right Reverends," "D. D. L. L. D.," or "Right Worshipful Masters &c," and they would appear in their true colors.

Gifts of healing. Some few of the official ministry pretend the operation of this gift in the literal sense, while the rest set it down as belonging to the days of miracles, and is past. Such a disordered state, and not being able to sustain a unity of sentiment in the body of Christ is evidence itself against the unscriptural method of an official ministry.

A cure in the literal sense has never yet positively been known among the official ministry; but in the spiritual sence they come nearer imitating the truth. This is executed in their method of church government, since there is the only place in which they effect to heal the spiritually sick, and in fact somewhere after this manner must this gift be executed; and of course the "judgement of the church" is always applied under the pretense of love to the spiritually diseased, while in fact the method always has the tendency to callous or deaden until it

is necessary to cut the member off entirely. The same method is applied to those who are without. Instead of carrying Gospel oil and ointment for the sick and wounded, they are, like the church members, demanded to surrender at the muzzle of a creed.

Naturally speaking a sound body is possessed with a sound mind, a mind that has forbid sinning in the violation of the laws of nature. On the contrary, a diseased body was permitted by the mind to commit some sin against the laws of nature, and this sinning was permitted and practiced, and passed from one stage of corruption to another until there was neither cure nor relief. This always is the result when permission by the mind is not forbidden in sinning. The true remedy is for the mind to post itself as to what is violation in nature, and forbid sinning.

So it is in the spiritual body of Christ. Having the body dictated to by incompetent talent, or perhaps not at all respecting the spiritual laws of health, neither in nor outside the church; it is merely a battle with

disease and a chance between life and death regardless of all efforts to cure or even remedy.

Such is the disordered state of the body of Christ under the guidance of an official ministry. Healing either spiritual or literal is impossible except by mere chance that these talents were elected, and such even would soon be corrupted by the honorable position of being an elected officer. It is irresistible.

But resurrect the talents of men and woman by a personal ministry; have members to fall into the line of duty in their respective calling; and the dictations and counsels for the health of the body will be complete. Then if any are sick physically it is a small matter when in health spiritually, but if such have sinned the promise is by prayer and the anointing of oil that they should be forgiven, with the restoration of health, at least spiritually.

It should not be understood that the "gift of cures" refer to the anointing with oil by the elders, as commanded in James 5: 14, 15; but a gift or calling in which certain

members of the church will operate and though the operations are not miraculous, they must be admitted to be as necessary and entitled to the same recognition as that of any other gift or office that was miraculously attended.

It is a favorite argument with the official ministry that every thing is miraculous in these gifts that tends to support the personal ministry. But for some reason the argument is never applied when a work of this nature is to be attended to, that comes under the elders office as in James 5:13,14. This shows the inconsistency and bigotry of those church officers who so industriously work the miraculous argument and turn right around and officiate in it.

The gift of healing may be observed in the world surrounding us.

In all communities are found characters, to whom those who are in trouble will readily approach and tell their tales of weaknesses, difficulties and woes because of their sympathizing natures and comforting dispositions. Such instances might in every neighborhood be cited to

illustrate this fact. Such will be the case in the body of Christ, when this natural gift is brought into use by abolishing the official ministry.

Evidently the haphazard business of an official ministry is antagonistic to the natural gift of healing. The only way out for the official ministry, is to declare it miraculous and forever past with the age of the apostles; but with this declaration, away goes all those other gifts, even prophesying which is that of general instruction and preaching, the apostles, Christ and the Holy Ghost; for all were miraculously attended and passed away with the age of the apostles. Such is the legitimate conclusion when argued from the man-made structure of an official ministry.

Helps. The official ministry claims to have them. The claim is based on acts 6: 1--8, where seven disciples were chosen to do service that the apostles did themselves. These seven brethren held a position next to the apostles. Possibly it was a position of elder or president which also was the position of the apostles as notic-

ed in 2 John 1. and 1 Pet. 5: 1. But be that as it may, one thing is certain, there were no degrees or offices between these seven chosen brethren and that of the elders. But look at the official method that has established a *first* and *second* degree in the ministry between these seven brethren and the presidents. Now where is their similarity? This shows their claim of possessing those scriptural *helpers* from this point as not being in good faith.

Again, there is the account that Stephen and Philip, two of the seven preached; Acts 6: 8, 9, 10, and 8; 5, 26, and 21: 8; and this without any election. But note that there was a careful election of the seven for a special work over which the apostles themselves had presided. What does this prove? It proves the doctrine of a personal ministry, because they were elected for a special work, and yet they preached; just what the Savior exemplified and commanded others to do, and what was enjoined on the apostles, which they in turn were to enjoin upon all others. Therefore the claim that the official

ministry fills the gift of helpers in their deacons, whom they elect has no similarity with the seven elected under consideration, neither in the station from which they are chosen, nor the position they occupy after being chosen.

Another claim of the official ministry that their deacons fill the place of *helpers*, is based on 1 Tim. 3: 8, 9, 10. But here they have the same obstacle to meet as in the foregoing claim. Read from 1 Tim. 3: 1—10, those helpers, (servants more properly,) it will be discovered, are placed next to the elder and placed there as the ready assistant of the elder or president of the congregation. But all are, and no doubt were, men who preached and taught, and otherwise proved themselves reputable, sincere, and men worthy to be trusted in this service.

The gift of helpers in the personal ministry is a gift like any of those other gifts under consideration. There may be many helpers just as there was a tendency at one time to be "many teachers," (James 3: 1;) and just as there could be many teachers without being presidents, so also may

there be many helpers and still not be chosen to the office of assistant as described in 1 Tim. third chapter. But it must be born in mind, that just as the office of a president is the "slave of all;" so is the position of the deacon or assistant the "servant of all." Either of these positions are not readily desired, because all of the freedom of the Gospel is accorded alike to all, whether in or outside those offices. All the difference there is, if any, is that these servants in their offices, may have their freedom curtailed, owing to the duties of the office.

The sphere of the helpers is an important one, and may be illustrated as follows: In the community where a public house is being built, are carpenters, masons, hodcarriers, stonecutters, quarrymen and the Scriptural helpers. In the out set the force in the quarry is not sufficient to the demand. To meet this demand the helpers operate there. Next there is force lacking in stonecutting; the helpers assist in that. Next, more help is required in masonry; along come the helpers and they assist there, Hodcarriers are lacking; they shove

the work along there; and so on all through carpentering, painting and plastering.

Precisely such talents and dispositions are found in society, and they are of the most apt kind, and exercise the keenest of judgment.

Now the society of God is a building of God in which those various talents are brought into play, as the apostles have taught, and the conclusion therefore is reasonable as well as Scriptural, that those helpers occupy and fill their positions after this manner in assisting in the ministry of the Gospel.

Governments. In the original it reads *directors*. And this is far preferable. Governors, and governments, express too much authority, and is not compatible with the spirit of Christ. "Man who made me a judge or divider over you?" (Luke 12: 14.) and, "who art thou that judgest another mans servant?" (Rom. 14: 4.) express a sentiment quite different from that of government.

Directors, as chosen men in a corporation, whom it is believed to understand the will of the company and are willing to guide its affairs

accordingly; is what should be expected in the gift of directors respecting the will of God in his congregation of people.

When it comes to that of *government* with the official ministry, they indeed have exercised such a gift, whether capable or not, and that to an extent that despises the lenient government of God by directors. And it is in this gift as in most of the others noticed; all executed by the haphazard elected, or otherwise appointed official, who never fails to show up his authority, gift or no gift, calling or no calling. As a consequence behold the creeds and divisions in churches and Christendom generally. Another sin that follows this corruption is the burrying of these talents, in preventing those from acting who possessed the gift of directing the congregation in sustaining the counsel of God. Such gifts would come forth in the personal ministry of the Gospel.

This gift is not an office, it is like all the rest, one that is born into the human family, and over which church elections or hierarchies have no more control than parents have

over the physiognomy of a child.

Diversities of tongues. [languages]. The method of an official ministry does not require such gifts as are adapted to the study of the different languages. In its method it contracts church extension so there is no necessity of any labor outside the sects of their native countries. And with the division breeding method of an official ministry, there is not much danger of their ever having any necessity of the gifts in languages, since they will always find sufficient employment in converting their apostate brethren at home.

Should even the official ministry wake up to the duty of saving souls in foreign languages, under the system, it would be but a rare chance that they would find successful men in the work; 1st. Because different languages are not attained by men of the age that are generally considered eligible to be elected to the ministry. 2nd. It takes years of study to commit languages. 3rd. The *gifted* in this study only are successful. 4th. The gifted in this direction, as well as those who have gifts in other direc-

tions, will not spend years of their youth in developing a gift upon the uncertainties of being called at some time by some hierarchy or church election to exercise in them. 5th. These gifts are found only to obtain, and be developed in the individual by practice in the public assembly, by the young, in being, not only urged as a privilege, but as a duty that is owing to God and humanity, to study and develop their talents for the promulgation of the Gospel of the Son of God.

CHAPTER 9

SPIRITUAL GIFTS CONTINUED; —FIRST CORINTHIANS FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

In the record that the apostle has made regarding those personal gifts, and that of exercising in them by the members in the assembly, it seems, that in the discussion of them in chapter 12, that the apostle breaks off suddenly in the end of that chapter to notice the great commandment of love, as if fearful that the members

might be wrought upon by this great liberty (in that of exercising in their talents publicly); that they might overlook the great principle of love, by which they must be governed in this great liberty. Therefore the principle of love is treated upon in chapter 13 as the governing power in all their deliberations. Then in chapter 14 the spiritual gifts are again continued, setting forth in verse 1, that in the governing and reigning virtue of love urged in chapter 13, that that however should not deprive them from a desire in these gifts. Accordingly we read; "Ardently persue love, and be emulous of the spiritual gifts; but rather that you may prophesy." Evidently teaching that the members are not to be deprived of the free exercise in these gifts, but while this is the case they must not long after those eminent or miraculously attended gifts, especially that one of speaking different languages, and thereby lose sight of, and pervert the natural gifts and their purposes. Therefore they are admonished according to this in verses 2, 3, and 4. Then in verse 5 the apostle permits, or even

urged speaking in the different languages, but they must be used for the general instruction of the assembly, and for preaching the Gospel.

Then in verses 6—22 the apostle shows the inconsistent time and use of languages; when, where and the conditions under which they may be used.

Now the point in particular, and that which relates to the subject under consideration is found in verses 23, 24. "If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all." Those who are not able to see the personal ministry of the Gospel in this text, certainly are compounded of some matter foreign to the Scriptures.

Again in verse 26: "How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, everyone of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifica-

cation."

To edification. Who sees to this matter? The clergy with some very old folks who think it "very dangerous" to let members speak in the assembly. *They* understand how to edify the church. *They* know it all. It has been handed down to them through a string of officials.

In verses 27-30 the apostle himself outlines the course to pursue to attain to the edification of the assembly, placing restriction upon those who perhaps labored in future predictions and had tiresome discourses on the prophecies of the Bible. It was not to edification, nor fair that those able men should take up all the time, therefore they are restricted and admonished that, "if any thing is revealed to another that sitteth by let the first hold his peace."

It is as plain as any thing ever recorded that it was the membership of the church that exercised publically in the church. And as such is it found again in this application in verse 31: "For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted."

Is the force of this language perceived? Language can not be plainer to license all members to speak in the public assembly. And to what purpose was this liberality and exchange of thoughts in the public assembly? The apostle himself says; *that all may learn.* If all learn by exchange of thoughts, which all should know is a mighty truth, what is it to deprive the members of this liberty? Ignorance; and in this is where Christendom will find itself when once the official ministry is abolished and are all enlightened by the gifts God gave to men.

Another result in this exchanging of thoughts in the public assembly is, *that all may be comforted.* There is no real comfort where all are strangers. In such company we move by the dictation of some one else, not knowing just where we are nor whether we are drifting, and about all the comfort under such circumstances are the rules and laws that surround us with officers to enforce them.

This is about the comfort and security of the sects of Christendom. This is no comfort at all compared

with the knowledge that we move wholly within the bonds of Christian fellowship, which are only created and supported in the interchange of Christian thoughts, even as it is indicated in the verse under consideration.

CHAPTER 10.

EVERY MAN A MINISTER.

“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man.” 1 Cor. 3: 5.

In this scripture is found the most positive testimony to support the doctrine of a personal ministry. It is so positive that it is difficult to see how an honest, loving child of God, that desires and delights to be an humble and obedient follower of the Lord can in the face of such testimony still persist in the support of an official ministry. There is no obscurity in this scripture. But there is some found in this connection that seems a designed effort to obscure and confuse this plain and positive

language in support of a personal ministry. This is found in verse 9 following which is so perverted from the original, that it would seem to support a clergy and laity in the church.

The common version reads: "For we are laborers together with God: Ye are Gods husbandry, ye are Gods building;" Having the impression to obtain that Paul and Apollos occupied a special appointment as co-workers with God, while the church, or the building, was that upon which the officers were employed.

But the original reads quite different; as follows: "For we are fellow-workers of God; a building of God." This puts Paul and Apollos upon an equality with the members of the church; agreeing with the text where Paul and Apollos were ministers by whom they believed, *even as the Lord gave to every man.*

Of course the apostle is to be recognized as a special instrument in the hands of God, and as such he also refers to himself in verse 10:— "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation,

and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." In this reference of the apostle to himself it will be observed that Apollos is left out, showing the special work and call of Paul.

It might be a question, what the special work of Paul consisted in? Answer: It consisted in the establishment of the wonderful work of equality recorded in the text, where every man is raised to the position of a minister equal with the apostle. The same may be noted in verse 10 where the apostle terms the brethren as *fellow workers*. This corresponds exactly with the labors of the Master with the twelve apostles. The apostles could not understand, in the beginning, how it was possible for the kingdom to be established and continued without some sort of hierarchy, in which some who are great will make rules and execute them and take care of the subjects. Now they are all found *for* an equality in the kingdom such as Christendom at present is a stranger to. It is remarkable when in various places in the original it is

noted that the apostle addresses the members as *co-workers* in the glad tidings.

"But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon". This is a clean cut-out of the official ministry. It means *every* or *any* member of the church may build upon the foundation without let or hinderance from any set of men or officers of the church. The only restriction being made here is the caution that every one takes heed how he builds thereupon, for "*every mans* work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every mans work of what sort it is."

There has been much speculation with the official ministry, who the builders could be; whether preachers of other denominations, or preachers within their own circle. But in the great freedom and liberty of a personal ministry all is made plain. Since they are now relieved on this point it might be profitable to raise another query as follows: Since the church of God throughout the Scriptures is spoken of as a building and

the temple of God: and, since it is universally reckoned by the clergy that there is no church without being officially organized; how is this building orgnized? There would considerable "smart Aleck," (if not crazy,) appear about the person that would come around and propose to organize a house, a barn, a mill or a factory. Come, let military societies, the great secret societies, and corporations of the world who must have officers, being held in tact, and accountable to the laws of the land, have and use the word *organization*. It is too high sounding for the humble followers of Christ. Better do away with such combustible material in building upon the "foundation." Somebody might suffer a loss by "the fire."

CHAPTER 11.

ABLE TO ADMOISH ONE ANOTER

"And I myself also am perswaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. *Rom. 14:15.*

This testimony plainly establishes the privilege and duty of exercising publically in the Gospel. But note on the other hand what may be demanded of the official ministry to meet this testimony and support itself. This demand is plain, and made in a few words. If they want to meet it let them prove that the apostle spoke only to church officers and not to members of the church in this place.

Perhaps the better way out for them in cutting off this liberty and freedom from the members, would be to say, that the members are not able to admonish one another, and they would very near get us. But if they will expose our incompetence in this manner we will also expose the source of it.

We read of the time in ages past when it was not advisable for the laity to read the scriptures at all. The officers had them then sure enough. Is our condition of helplessness not brought about after the same manner? Prevent any practice in public, discourage it as a duty, and brand all such as manifest the

desire to exercise, as being aspiring; is a very successful method of subduing the laity and holding them in subjection.

It is a shame on us in this enlightened age, when congregations of professing christians must depend wholly and solely upon a few men to have a meeting and call it one to edification for all, when one, and that in most cases a dwarfed and bigoted spirit is to supply the entertainment where perhaps a dozen different talents would be required to Scripturally meet the demand.

The official minister of the Gospel has been honored, and has been given audience and otherwise publically dandled until the fundamental principle of the fellowship of the Gospel has been destroyed. We should blush when we see that those early christians were able to admonish one another. The introduction of the foreign system of an official ministry into the Christain church is responsible for all the ignorance, incompetence, and beside the destruction of the liberty of the Gospel. It should be abolished; the sooner the better.

But some one argues that it is only *admonishing* that is referred to in the text, and this has always been permitted, being fulfilled in private meetings and conversations; and in church counsels. This disposition and liberty, (which is none at all, merely to save the official system) reminds one of the liberty generally granted to the deacons in the Christian churches, and particularly in the Dunker church; that is they might admonish in meeting, where the official minister is absent, but were forbidden to rise to their feet. See Minutes of Annual Councils 1835. Art. 15. See this same decision reconfirmed in 1868. Art. 11. This is an example of the jealous care with which this worldly, man-made, and Romish innovation has, and is still being guarded. And after this twisty manner, in order to save the custom, would they make a disposition of the liberty and duty set forth in the text.

Taking the turn that it means simply admonishing, such as might be given on any occasion of privately meeting one another; and does not refer to public exercises in the assem-

bly is very far from honorable dealing in the Scriptures of truth. Note the definition of admonish: "To reprove gently, To counsel against wrong practices, To instruct or direct; to inform." This even is part of the work of the president in the Christian assembly:— "But we entreat you, brethren, to acknowledge those who toil among you, both presiding over you in the Lord, and *admonishing* you." 1 Thess. 5:12

There are other testimonies that admonishing anciently was practiced by the disciples in the public assembly. One such is found in Col. 3:16:— "Let the word of the anointed dwell in you richly; teaching and admonishing each other in all wisdom; in psalms and hymns, in spiritual songs, singing with gratitude in your hearts to God." Here *teaching* in addition to admonishing is commanded. There is no getting around this. It is too plain and positive. Evidently, all the disciples took part in the deliberations in the public assembly.

It will be noticed here that the original reads: Teaching and admonishing in *all wisdom*, instead of teach-

ing and admonishing in *psalms and hymns and spiritual songs*, as it reads in the common Bible. But it is not very difficult in catching on to, and explaining these little mistakes. They are but manifest weaknesses of the clergy. You see it appears so much more officious if this admonishment is to be in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and have us to incline to the idea of an "elect" to prate around, whom it is supposed contains all the wisdom.

Another, and still more positive testimony that the grand doctrine of a personal ministry was anciently practiced in the assembly, is found in Heb 10: 25;— "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

Here the disciples are commanded to exhort one another in the assembly; and this, with the former scriptures makes it plain that exhortation, teaching, and admonishing was general among the Christians in their assemblies in the days of the apostles.

In this passage as well as all notice-

ed heretofore, there is not the slightest hint that this work is to be done by regularly elected, or appointed ministers, who will be specially gifted and endowed to perform these exhortations, teachings and admonitions.

It may however not be amiss to note here again, that there are those who are selected and ordained by the laying on of hands, to preside in the congregation, similar to that which all public and deliberative congregations subject themselves to,—a president and other necessary assistants to conduct the deliberations and other business of the assembly.

The power of those however in the assembly is no greater than the power of the least member in the assembly where the assembly proposes to dictate and rule instead of having a dictator.

The chief labor of those servants is to get the sentiments in regard to conducting the assembly orderly; assisting those who are too timid and put the brakes on those who would be too forward, and see that the accomplished do their duty in carrying the Gospel to outside appointments, and

into new territory.

CHAPTER 12

NEEDED TO BE TAUGHT, WHEN THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TEACH.

“For even when you ought, by this time, to be teachers, you again have need of one to teach you certain first elements of the oracles of God; and have become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food. Every one however partaking of milk, is unskilled in the word of righteousness; for he is an infant. But solid food is for adults—— for those possessing faculties habitually exercised for the discrimination of both good and evil.” Heb. 5: 12, 13, 14.

This is another of those positive testimonies that permits the condemnation of an official ministry. This text itself is a fort that furnishes such simple protection that the most unskilled in the Word may defy the assailants of the personal ministry.

It is not only unassailable as a support to the personal doctrine, but

if it means any thing, it has the official ministry to hold the membership in ignorance and in a degraded position. They needed to be taught when they should have been teachers, which shows evidently, that while they had this great freedom they made but little, and in some instances no progress at all in qualifying themselves in the work of the ministry. They, it must be admitted, had no excuse for yet being babes; but we are forced to this state by the innovation of electing men who disgracefully keep old and young at the bottle all the days of their lives. They had no excuse, it was simply neglect.

It should not be understood that the Hebrews, whom the apostle was addressing, were universally neglectful in their duty of the personal ministry of the Word. This is learned in Heb. 6: 10, 11, 12, which is in connection with the passage under consideration:— “For God is not unjust, so as to be forgetful of your work, and the love which you manifested for his name, having served the saints and are serving. But we

earnestly desire each one of you to show the same diligence for the full completion of the hope to the end: in order that you may not become sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patient endurance are inheriting the promise." Thus it is plainly seen that they were not all neglectful in *having served the Saints*,

Each one of you to show the same diligence. In order that you may not be sluggish. What does this diligence consist in? That is the point exactly. The official ministry of course will say it means not to be sluggish in serving the temporal wants of the Saints; in order to shield their worldly offices. But in this is where issue is taken with them. It was rather too much of this world that they were serving themselves with, and no concern in making themselves *teachers* of the things that belong to the Kingdom. Read from Heb. 5: 11, 12, 13, to Heb. 6: 14, 15, 16,—read it two or three times and be convinced that the latter has reference to the same neglected service as that of the former. The former quotation,

it is evident, has reference to that of the ministry, and the latter being written in the same connection without any change of the subject, establishes the idea of a personal ministry here again.

Throughout the Scriptures where teachers and teaching is referred to, reference is had to the same kind of labor that the apostle refers to here in the neglect of the Hebrew brethren. A further observation that might be made also, is, that there is no difference in preaching and teaching so far as the advancement of the Kingdom is concerned, nor difference of rank in those engaged in the calling; all the difference there is, some talents are adapted to teaching, others to preaching, and in some places in the Scriptures, as for instance in the text under consideration, teaching may also included preaching.

When Christ taught his disciples how to pray, to preach, and baptize and institute the ordinances of a supper, communion and feetwashing, He was *teaching* the kingdom of God. When the Lord preached the sermon on the mount, He *preached* the king-

dom of God,

When Paul and Barnabas went down to Antioch, they may have preached, but they did go there as teachers, for what was the use for them to waste time and spend "a whole year" in one place where they had received the Gospel and were baptized without their aid? The conclusion is that they went there to train and practice the disciples in the Gospel and make them competent in "serving the saints," and have them in turn carry the Gospel to the world and baptize those believing, as those disciples did who were taught by the Lord and the apostles, and who by persecution were driven from Jerusalem, brought the Gospel to them.

Therefore it is reasonable to conclude their work to have consisted in qualifying those disciples for the work of the ministry. *Teaching*, is to educate, and educate is to bring up; to cultivate and discipline the various powers of the mind, Teaching applies to the communication of knowledge. — *Webster*.

To the reasonable mind it is plain that this sort of testimony is meant

in the places where reference is made to the subject. But the point in particular is the positive terms, in the Scriptures under consideration, with which the apostle enjoins it upon the disciples to discipline their minds in this service. Notice; "For even when you ought, by this time to be teachers, you again have need of one to teach you." Notice again the eulogy of the apostle in those who have been faithful in this matter: "For God is not unjust, so as to be forgetful of your work and the love which you manifested for his name, having served the saints, and are serving." Evidently showing in the first rebuke, though it was general, it was not applicable to all. Now comes the injunction upon those who might become sluggish in the matter:—"But we earnestly desire each one of you to show the same diligence for the full completion of the hope to the end: in order that you may not become sluggish."

This is another example of how faithful all things were enjoined upon the disciples as the Lord enjoined it upon the apostles in the

Commission; having a perfect harmony to run all through the Scriptures; being prosecuted after the manner that it was taught and exemplified by the Lord and his apostles.

In view of this personal duty of the members preparing themselves to minister in, and propagate the Gospel, the method of an official ministry presents itself, not only as an innovation, but an imposition, and an assumption of worldly arrogance and authority in the church, that is everywhere in the Scriptures denounced as at enmity and antagonistic to the kingdom of Christ. Moreover in the light of such individual responsibility in order to sustain and propagate the Gospel; the official institution is not only a fault, but a serious error, in this that it monopolizes the things that belong to the kingdom of God, and that often by vicious and hotheaded men, full of hate and sectional ideas that lead into strifes and divisions, whereas if this personal authority was abolished which would reduce such firebrands to the level of all, the church would, by common sense reasoning soon become united into one body

upon the plain teaching and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.

CHAPTER 13

COMMANDED TO GIVE HEED WHEN URGED TO PREACH.

“Quench not the spirit; despise not prophesying.” 1 Thess. 5:19, 20.

Several things are plainly taught here. Evidently in the first part of the text, the Spirit is to urge upon us some kind of action; and the reasonable conclusion is, that it is ministering our gifts to one another in the public assembly. In fact it may positively be asserted that such is the proper reference until some better explanation is given; and this is very difficult to do when it is taken into consideration that this, like all other cases is approved by action; since by action only is expression of approval or disapproval, obedience or disobedience made to any dealings in this life. And therefore when an action is sought to the command, *not to quench the spirit*, it must have reference to that of communicating in

the public assembly. This conclusion is also supported in the latter part of the text,—*“despise not prophesying.* The admonishment being intended, that as the Spirit would urge them to speak in the assembly, they should not, as has been noticed heretofore, long after some eminent gift or position to the neglect of the natural and most useful gift,—general preaching.

That there was a disposition among the disciples to desire the more eminent gifts, has already been observed in the writing of the apostle, against that of the desire of speaking in different languages. This same weakness in the disciples is hinted at in James 3: 1;—*“My brethren be not many teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater judgment.”* This plainly shows that all these callings were open to be engaged in by anyone, and therefore the admonishment in the text, not to despise prophesying,—general preaching; the gift of most general use.

How beautifully the Scriptures harmonize on the personal ministry, when we put away our preconceived ideas.

CHAPTER 14.

COMMANDED TO MINISTER
OUR GIFTS TO ONE ANOTHER.

“**A**s every one hath received the gift even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of **G**od. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of **G**od: if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability that **G**od giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever, Amen.” 1 Pet. 4: 10; 11.

This passage of Scripture, requires no explanation to support the individual duty of ministering publically in the Gospel. All the explanation comes in on the other side. How the clergy would explain this so as to prohibit the members from exercising their gifts, and continue the practice of electing and supporting a ministry is not so readily understood. It is difficult even to think of a loose argument so that it might be used to effect this.

Mr. Barnes believes in a regularly authorized ministry by and for the

church. He says the gift in verse 10, "seems to refer to every kind of endowment by which we can do good to others, especially every kind of qualification furnished by religion by which we can help others. It does not refer here particularly to the ministry of the Word—though it is applicable to that and includes that—but to all the graces by which we can contribute to the welfare of others."

There is no argument in this note of this expositor against an application of this to support a personal ministry; it is even to the contrary; water on the wheel of the personal doctrine, as the saying goes, in the admission that "it is applicable to that and includes that." So far as "doing good to others" is concerned, that has no weight at all in preventing an application to the personal doctrine. If any difference it would rather more be expected to receive good from men professing to be ministers of the Gospel than others. This would leave the comment of this great man altogether favoring the personal doctrine.

When our able expositor comes to the words; (verse 11,) "If any man speak," he admits that it refers here particularly to the office of the ministry. Of course in this we all agree, and it is a pleasant agreement, for it fully and completely grants and sustains the personal ministry and that by an opponent of the doctrine. *What better evidence could anyone ASK!*

As plain as this Scripture is, it will however hardly be acceptable to the elected clergy. A deaf ear will likely be turned to it like all the rest of the passages thus far noticed, as well as those that will be noticed further on.

There would be no difficulty in bringing the force of this passage into play if it were to read after the following manner: "As every *minister* hath received the gift so minister the same to the *church*, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." If such an expression could be found in the Bible, our ministers would have us to catch on in a hurry. But not one plain positive scripture can be found in the New Testament that supports the idea that min-

istering in the Gospel is an office to which men are either elected or appointed by the church or by any other parties of men.

One plain passage for electing men to minister in the Gospel would send the personal doctrine to the ditch with the support it would receive on that side because of its popularity. But even several dozen, when custom and usage is against an idea scarcely seem sufficient backing to break their popularity.

Custom and usages in the church are like the styles of fashion in the world, they go and come at their pleasure and that generally by the approval of all. But when once they have departed, then we see our folly, then we would even be ashamed any longer to be caught in their foolish array. So it is with the customs and usages under which we have been reared in church society. We will even hold onto them in the face of better light and knowledgd.

But the sword is raised on the Romish innovation and custom now prevailing of electing men to minister in the Gospel, and demanding all

others to stay in silence, and everyone is warned to look out if they don't want to get hurt. If the personal doctrine is the truth it had better be regarded. "Whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken: but on whosoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Matt. 21: 44.

CHAPTER 15.

RECOGNITION OF THE DISCIPLES AS MINISTERS AND COLLABORERS WITH THE APOSTLE.

"But all things are from that God who has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of the reconciliation; namely, that God was by Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting to them their offences; and has deposited with us the word of the reconciliation. On behalf of Christ, therefore, we are ambassadors; as if God were inviting through us, we entreat, on behalf of Christ—be ye reconciled to God." 2Cor. 5: 18, 19, 20.

Note: The apostle says; "God who has reconciled *us*;" that is the apostle including the church. Again, "Has given to *us* the ministry." That

means, to the apostle including the church. Again, "Has deposited with *us* the Word of the reconciliation," of course including the church. Again, "*we* are ambassadors." This also includes the church.

It would be a bold assertion, and without foundation to say that the apostle here is speaking to a select body of the church when he is writing to "the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the Saints which are in all Achaia. 2 Cor. 1: 1.

It would be no less weak and ignorant to say that the apostle is using the word "*us*" for courtesy sake; for it would be liable to deceive the church, in impressing the Saints, that they had a part in the reconciliation and ambassadorship for Christ when this was not the case at all.

To put the text into a light to favor the official ministry it should read as follows: "But all things are of God who hath reconciled *the ministers* to himself." Or to mean only the apostle, it should read that *he* was reconciled to God. Again, "Has given to the *ministers* the ministry of the reconciliatipn."

Such reading, of course, would make the ministers the ambassadors for Christ. But such an exposition would never do; for it would be about equal to saying that the church at Corinth and the Saints in all Achaia were not reconciled to God, and that God has a certain class of chosen men, who are reconciled to God, to keep them reconciled. Verily this is the nature of an official ministry. When sounded to the bottom it is priest craft pure and simple. Such dispositions of the Scriptures would exalt a certain class and degrade the church of God which is "a pillar and foundation of the truth."

But let us follow the apostle on the same subject in the next chapter, which is also connected with those passages that have just been noticed.

"**A**nd being also co-laborers we exhort you not to receive the favor of God in vain." 2 Cor. 6; 1.

Here the apostle terms the Saints co-laborers if it be the fact that he is speaking to the church at Corinth and to all the Saints in Achaia, which is a fact that will not be attempted to be denied.

But now for the proof that this co-laboring had reference to the ministry it is only necessary to pass to verses 3, 4:—"Giving no offense that the ministry is not blamed; but in everything establishing ourselves as Gods servants, by much patient endurance in afflictions, in necessities, in watchings, in fasting &c." This is plain and positive in its reference and application to the Saints.

It should also be noticed that this *patient* endurance in these things is not, as it is urged by the official party, preaching. But is that which establishes them as ministers of God. This knocks that old argument, of which we are admonished, and have heard from infancy; that all are preachers in private conversation and conduct. But it evidently is not the case that good conduct in the disciples makes them preachers. Good conduct and ministering in the Gospel are two things, and the apostle has said in the foregoing that good conduct will fit the Saint to preach the Gospel. And it is equally as plain that an honest and exemplary life in patience, peace and conversation is all that is required

and the only qualification that is required to fit the Christian professors for the duty of ministering publically in the Gospel.

These unreasonable bands, that when Saints fill these qualities in life and yet are by an official ministry required to sit in silence all the days of their lives, however much they are urged and would delight in public admonishment; must be removed and the ancient method be applied to make spiritual progress and prosperity.

It is not out of order here to more closely notice the common argument that good conduct and supporting the official ministry is preaching the Gospel. Is good conduct and preaching the Gospel two different things? Answered no. Then for argument sake it is granted that good conduct is preaching the Gospel. Very well, if good conduct is preaching, preaching in turn should count for good conduct. Then why, if there is no difference have the institution of calling men to preach, and be so inconsistent and create such a domineering position in the church? Why go to all this trouble for holding elections

and bar such as would desire to audibly and publically speak to the people? An honest christian professor that believed that there is no difference in good conduct and preaching should live consistently by it.

Again, if conduct is preacing, preaching is conduct; and if there is no difference in these two virtues Scripturally, then the man that preaches by good conduct does not necessarily have to appear before the church in public admonition and general instruction. Of course not. Very well. Then if there is no difference in these two virtues Scripturally, and the keeping of one, counts for the others, ("for it is a poor rule that does not work both ways") the person who preaches publically does not necessarily require good conduct if the keeping of one answers for the other, he can do what he pleases and still is a good and true minister of the Gospel. Such are the corrupt conclusions that we may argue when man goes to figure by perversion for his own views and notion of things. Educated as many of the preachers are at this day they should be ashamed

of themselves in advancing such arguments.

Preaching by supporting the preacher. This is argued as equal to preaching. If supporting preachers makes those who give of their money and meat to the family of the man who preaches; scriptural preachers, then it is a very easy thing to be a preacher of the Gospel; for the money and meat of liars, thieves, drunkards and hypocrites, will, if given to a preacher be equally as effectual as that of a Saint; and if these classes can be preachers, preachers may be liars drunkards and hypocrites. This is the same disposition and applied by the same rule. They say it is not right to mix things up this way. Well then why don't they cease this mixing?

Such are the legitimate conclusions that may be drawn from this popular but ignorant and light minded way of handling and dealing in the Word of God. The right way is not to pervert language and its common usage in the first place, and let preaching mean preaching, and good conduct which qualifies men to preach, mean good conduct and noth-

ing else; and giving to those who might be making more sacrifices than others, still mean giving and nothing else. By such perversions in language, if it is permitted, anything can be established and proven by the Word of God. Better cease this.

Having now noticed and established the personal ministry from those passages, 2 Cor. 5:18 to chapter 6:5, —it follows as proper and right to accept all passages where the plural *we* and *us* are used with propriety in the application of the disciples engaging in the ministry. Accordingly it reads in 2 Cor. 3:6, "Who also hath made *us* able ministers of the new Testament; not of the letter but of the spirit, for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Then the glories of "The ministration of death" and that of life is being discussed in this connection in verses 7--16, when in verse 17 reference is again had to that learned in verse 6 about all being made able ministers, and freedom in the Gospel, which reads: "Now the Lord is that spirit: and where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty."

Then the same subject is contin-

ued in 2 Cor. 4: 1, in these words: "Therefore seeing that we have received this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every mans conscience in the sight of God."

This being addressed to the disciples and in direct connection with the foregoing liberty and glorious ministration of the Gospel of which the apostle said they were made able ministers, is additional evidence that the apostle in these things had reference to a personal ministry by the disciples, and as such was established in the Christian church.

CHAPTER 16

A CLERGYMAN'S BIBLE.

"And he gave indeed the apostles, and the prophets, and the evangelists, and shepherds and teachers, for the complete qualification of the saints for the work of service, in order to the building

up of the body of the anointed one." Eph. 4: 11, 12.

It will be noticed that in quite a number of places our common Bible varies considerably from the original, specially as it relates to the personal ministry. This is particularly manifest in the text when it is compared. While the text is direct to the point that those different gifts are for to qualify the Saints in the ministry, in order that they may edify one another, there is no such idea to be drawn from the common Bible. The difference is, when the sense of the text in the common Bible, as it is punctuated is set forth, it conveys the idea definitely that those gifts were given "for the perfecting of the saints," only, but does not say in what. But it is also evident that it is not in that of the ministry as it reads in the original, for in the next sentence in the common Bible it reads that those gifts were given, "for the work of the ministry," which would, and does readily apply itself to an official ministry, and would be a splendid support to the ministerial meetings. Further then it fast-

ens this as the correct impression by saying that those gifts were given "for the edifying of the body of Christ." This is the very reverse as it is taught in the original text.

The text, as it reads in the common Bible may indeed be termed a clergyman's text. And with so many of these errors, specially as they relate to the subject of the ministry of the Gospel, the King James translation might be termed a clergyman's Bible.

It is a Scriptural commandment to "prove all things and hold fast to that which is good," and to "judge righteous judgement." To prove these things and bring a righteous judgment to bear upon these seemingly designed faults let the text as it stands in each book be proved by a righteous test. Suppose the text as it stands in the common Bible was translated from Greek manuscripts in the fourth century, and an official ministry had been based upon it, having an additional support of many other Scriptural testimonies in the same translation, such as are found throughout the scriptures in favor of

a personal ministry: Now, here comes a person with a Scripture after the manner of the text above, declaring the official ministry corrupt since the way it reads, it is urged, the church members are to be qualified and be the ministers instead of an official ministry. Accordingly, reasonable men, to prove this new discovery will demand from whence the authority of this Scripture? Will a righteous judgment not immediately be fixed upon his reply that it is from a Greek manuscript dated in the fifteenth century? By a reversal is the way to prove things and judge a righteous judgment, and if the clergy are inclined to receive it they can themselves apply it to their unscriptural position. In the same manner may all the texts be judged that relate themselves to the subject.

This same dodging disposition is manifest in Eph. 3: 9. In the original it reads: "Even to enlighten all as to what is the administration of that secret." Compare this with the common Bible and it will be observed that while the text definitely refers to all being enlightened in the minis-

try of the Word; the common translation does not convey any such an idea.

Again, in the same chapter, verses 10, 11, 12, it reads: "In order that now may be made known to the governments and to the authorities in the heavenlies, through the congregation the much diversified wisdom of God, According to a plan of the ages which he formed for the Anointed Jesus our Lord, by whom we have this freedom of speech." Here it is stated in positive language that the Gospel is to be preached to the governments and authorities in the heavenlies *through the congregation* by its diversified wisdom; by a *freedom of speech*.

But turn to our common translation and there is not a thought of this kind would enter the mind, that is, that of the congregation qualifying itself in such duties, and enjoy a freedom of speech.

The text with those Scriptures noticed here are not the only Scriptures in which this seeming attempt is made to obscure the liberty of the Gospel. When the texts that are ap-

plied to the support of a personal ministry are compared it will be discovered throughout the Scriptures.

The failing of the common translation is hardly a subject of the charity that is owing to ordinary failings. If light continues to flow in upon honest and sincere thinkers who will seek for the earliest manuscripts of the Bible as naturally as the rich lead is followed to the gold mine, the King James translation will yet stand a good chance to inherit the name of being the clergymans Bible.

CHAPTER 17.

HARMONY OF OTHER SCRIPTURES.

The Scriptures abound with harmonious passages upon the subject of a personal ministry. Even Scriptures that have been thought to support the official ministry are equally if not more appropriately applicable in the system of a personal ministry of the Gospel. Such for instance is 1 Cor. 9: 14. "Those who publish

the glad tidings, to live by the glad tidings."

The conclusion that since men are to live by publishing the Gospel therefore they must be elected, is not reasonable, for, men may be justifiable in such a claim without any election. And more especially is this a fact since the scriptures abound with the doctrine of a personal ministry which naturally brings with it inequality of sacrifices.

While the inequality in sacrifice may not be quite so great under the personal ministry as that of the official, yet it will exist even as it did in the time of the apostles when they were traveling from place to place teaching and establishing congregations. It should not be expected that this be done without expense although Paul did it.

It must be recollected that since the world will always be subject to conversion and growth in the development of the gifts that God gave to man, consequently there must always be a greater sacrifice upon a certain part of the disciples; accordingly we have scriptures to meet the

case. In Rom. 12: 8, where diligence is urged in reference to personal gifts, we read: "The one giving with simplicity." Having reference to the same as Gal. 6: 6. "Let the person being taught the Word communicate [give] to the instructor."

That the Scriptures teach a method of advancing the congregation in the knowledge of the Gospel after the manner of any deliberative assembly where knowledge is sought and ideas exchanged by subjecting themselves to the enactments of the assembly and enforced by a president, is plainly inferred from 1 Tim. 5: 17. "Let the elders who preside well be esteemed worthy of double honor, especially those who toil in word and teaching."

Here are elders that *preside* in the public assembly that do not preach or teach and yet are appointed to the important position of elder—overseer. This shows that there are those in the congregation who hold this office yet never travel and preach but preside in the public assembly. Showing conclusively that there are those, who if they are lov-

ed by all, have sacrifices to make for all, especially those who, beside this presiding in the assembly, go out and toil in preaching. The personal sacrifices of those elders no doubt was very great in order to regulate the members in conduct and manners and speaking in the right kind of a spirit and to see that sound doctrine was advocated in the assembly. This is evident from 1 Tim. 1: 3, where Paul charges Timothy to "remain still at Ephesus, as I intreated thee, when departing for Macedonia, so that thou mayest charge *some* not to teach differently." Again in Gal 1: 6, 7. "I am astonished that you have so quickly turned away from him who called you by the favor of Christ to other glad tidings; not that there are any other; but there are certain persons who are troubling you, and wishing to subvert the glad tidings of the anointed."

Why did they not, according to the present order of church power, expel, or at least take the offices from those *certain persons*? Simply because expelling from the church, as well as electing to preach was not

established in the church.

Again, Titus 1: 10, 11; is another evidence that it was a "free pitch in," in that of promulgating the Gospel in the apostolic age;— "For there are many unruly persons, foolish talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision; whom it is necessary to silence; who overturn whole families, teaching for sordid gain what is not proper."

Evidently there was a class of teachers in the church who even made their charges for teaching. It would actually seem that they had something gotten up after the plan of the official ministry, since they taught for *sordid gain*.

If there had been such a thing as a regularly appointed or elected ministry established by the apostles there would have been, in these instances all the occasion in the world to say something about it. Pshaw. there was no such a thing in the days of the apostle unless it was with those "sordid gain" teachers.

There is no excuse or reason in the world why in all these cases the apostles should not in some way refer

to some official violation that should be officially corrected if such were intended. It certainly was not because the inspired apostles were stupid men and did not take of the ambitious spirit of ruling and governing. This is natural in most all men, and that was the bent of their minds in their early calling to the apostleship; even as it has been made evident in their attempt to silence the Lone disciple whom they saw, as they thought, working without being properly authorized.

Now when in the divine records it is read at much later dates that the minds of the apostles are practically changed and the natural order of government practically reversed;—official men even running the church for pay, the apostles not able to do anything more than to reprove it; Christendom it would seem should begin to think upon the error of their worldly church governments and return to the apostolic spirit of Christianity. There is a wonderful lesson in the acts of the apostle John, who so early was ready to execute this worldly authority but afterwards had his fellowship threatened by those

officious fellows as may be read in 3 John.

If the apostles would have had any institution of an official character they would have called the church together and silenced them or suspended fellowship with those brethren altogether after the manner that we do. Evidently those methods of church government as we call it were not in force in the days of the apostles. What then was the remedy? Titus 1:13 says. "Therefore reprove them severely, so that they may be sound in the faith."

The method by which to regulate the disorderly is plainly perscribed here; argue them into sound doctrine. And if there are those who will not be argued into the right, and the congregation is conscious of disorders, it is an easy matter to discipline such, and that too without expelling. Let the congregation through their president pass sentiments upon their foreign ideas or disorderly conduct, and inform them of this displeasure, and have them discontinue their foreign ideas in the public assembly, and for disorderly conduct, withdraw from

them, not expelling, but admonish them as brethren.

But as regards different doctrine that some may teach, and being requested not to teach it in the public assembly, yet they have all their rights to church property and make their own appointments. The only thing that may be done by the general congregation is that of withdrawing by giving no audience.

If however such gain audience then they evidently are not rejected wholly by the congregation. There is a possibility that the congregation might be in error. Any and all who are not fully convinced of the correctness of any doctrine taught under such circumstances should go to hear such until fully convinced of the error or correctness of the new ideas or doctrine.

Should all be convinced that error is advocated all should cease to give audience and by this effect is Scripturally rejected after a first and second admonition that is providing, an attempt has been threatened or made to effect a division in the congregation. In the absence of any such at-

tempts, yet fail to receive audience, he has still a perfect right to his views, fall into line with the congregation, even propagate his views whenever and wherever acceptable either private or public

In the rejection referred to it should not be understood, as it is common, that it means expelling; for what is the use to expel a man when he has already withdrawn? Why go through such sham work or still worse, a mockery, claiming it to be done by the power of the church when the spirit previously has decided all this? All that can be done Scripturally is to turn away from such, avoid them, don't go to visit them or eat with them that they may be ashamed of themselves.-2 Thess.3: 14.

Any way what is the use to go through the formality of expelling such as are determined to make a division? They will not molest the assembly if they think it so corrupt that they cannot continue their fellowship any longer. And if they do not intend a division, and have failed in audience of course they will stay in the communion of the assembly. In

such a course by the assembly, there is nothing to lose, but the chances are all for gain. This course accords with the spirit of Christ and the apostles as is evident from many passages in the New Testament.

Expelling is mean, worldly and low. It belongs to the powers of this world. The banishment of criminals is on the same method of punishment. Expelling will do for political or even moral and mutual societies whose interests are wholly in this world. But it will never do for the amicable kingdom of Christ.

But when the official method in Christianity is studied it comes very near being a necessity to have an institution of expelling or banishment or some such penalty. This is the case from the fact that punishment may only be inflicted by degrading the standard of the individual.

Under the official method men and women are taught to be hardly worthy to be inside the church, say nothing of using liberties, and of course it follows if any are to be degraded for disorderly conduct that casting them out of the assembly

and banishing to outer darkness is the only resort.

But under the personal method the lowest is made the peer of the greatest. Indeed the greatest are made the least and the least greatest, and all on the level of brethren, and even ministers and brethren of the Lord Jesus.

Therefore the mere hint that brethren by some disorderly conduct are losing the respect and proper estimation of their high calling in the congregation, and their company disregarded is severer on the selfrespecting individual than the worldly institution of expelling.

Advocates of the official method have urged Rom. 10: 14, 15, where it reads: "How shall they hear without a preacher, and how can they preach except they be sent," as authority for an official ministry.

This passage, it must be admitted would harmonize with the doctrine of an official ministry if such were taught. But since such a doctrine is not found in the Scriptures it will be right to see if it will not harmonize with the personal ministry. All

that is necessary to show that it does is to refer to another passage that is frequently quoted by the official advocates. This is recorded in Acts 13: 2,—“Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work where unto I have called them.”

While this is supposed to be, not only in accord with the official ministry but a basis for the doctrine itself, it does not answer the purpose for either, for Paul and Barnabas were ministers many years before the spirit commanded them to be separated for this mission. But this is not all. When Acts 13: 1, 2, is compared with 14: 26, it will be noticed that this separation was for the purpose of fulfilling a special mission. It is therefore a great mistake to conclude that this separation was from among the so-called laity and justifies an official ministry.

This separation was dictated by the spirit because the congregation at Antioch could spare the services of Paul and Barnabas, the congregation being able to admonish one another.

Precisely after this manner should the congregation send men at pres-

ent to fulfill missions outside the congregation. Men and women will want to be sent even if all are ministers in the Gospel and take with them the good will of the congregation.

As to who should be sent must be dictated by the spirit, which is now determined by the good judgment in the spiritually minded Saints.

The disposition made here of the separation of Barnabas and Saul will answer the query, "How shall they hear without a preacher, and how can they preach except they be sent." Barnabas and Saul were separated and *sent* being already preachers. Now does it not appear that very little good judgment is exercised, and perhaps a little lack of integrity and fidelity to Gods Word, when it cannot be perceived by official advocates, that when a congregation had a dozen or more competent members in expounding the Gospel publically, that not some should fairly, properly and Scripturally be selected and sent to fill mission outside the congregation?

But such seeming stupidity if not stubbornness we land in when we *will*

have our preconceived ideas, customs and usages that we have been brought up under. Preferring our fathers before the enlightening influences of the Holy spirit. Our fathers who now sleep, but who have lived to the best of their judgment will themselves condemn us in such a course.

Another passage of Scripture that harmonizes beautifully with the personal ministry is 2 Tim. 4: 3, 4:—"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables."

It will be observed that the harmony with the personal ministry here is produced in the discord it strikes with the official ministry. Not to *endure sound* doctrine will readily apply to the unsound doctrine of an official ministry. *Turned unto fables*, again points out the very attractive manner in which practical theorists can by improper illustrations handle the word of God to suit any creed or doctrine. In fact it appears that

the apostle foresaw the invention of an official ministry such as is now prevailing in Christendom.

Ambitious and hot-headed men; men who have never learned what it is to subject themselves and be governed, but always aspire to govern and be paid for it; these are they who create divisions; and that which invariably follows this sort of individuals is an official ministry by which a sort of government is soon set up to propagate their particular ideas. This creates warring sects that are not only rife in Christendom but are within each particular sect and continually dividing, inflaming the laity and humbler classes with the idea that "gain is Godliness," and always keep them in a race for the best trained tale-teller turning their ears away from the truth of the humble, self denying and equitable institution of a personal ministry as established by Christ and his apostles.

Listen again to the harmony of other Scriptures as they are recorded by the apostle; "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus

Christ; that in everything ye are enriched by him in all utterance and in all knowledge." 1 Cor. 1: 4, 5. Again, about the same expression in 2 Cor. 8: 7,—“Therefore as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.”

Knowledge and utterance is the basis of all intelligence in the human family. This is what the Corinthian brethren possessed. It is past any argument here to support the idea that they possessed this, and made it manifest in and through an official ministry. It is therefore in perfect harmony with the doctrine of a personal ministry.

The world in order to make themselves wise in utterance and knowledge have public schools and colleges. But according to the official the congregation of God must elect or appoint some one whom it is supposed to have all of this *knowledge and utterance*. How inconsistent! The disciples who should even know “that which surpasseth knowledge, (Eph. 3: 19,) and are to be “ready always to

give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you,"(1 Pet. 3: 15.) are either compelled to stand the bluff or go and seek some official, perhaps a great debater to answer for him. And then even after it is made by those smart theorists, the food, (if it may be called food at all,) invariably is put into racks so high that neither sheep nor goats are able to share in it.

There is no occupation in this life that is so remunerative and urgent as that of preaching the Gospel. Mark 8:36; John 4: 35-38. And there is none in which the laborers are so scarce Matt. 9: 36, 37, 38; Luke 10: 2. Yet in the face of this great pay,— pay that may not be valued by worldly estimation,— and extreme scarcity of laborers, the unscriptural official method in publishing the Gospel have so managed affairs in the church that thousands of laborers are idle, perhaps one in one hundred on an average is an active worker: *Think of it!* A work from God and of such an important character; that of the salvation of souls, and be curtailed in this sort of a manner!

There is no occupation or trade that the apprentice may enter, and it is open for him to rise to the equality of his master. And this is the object that is diligently sought both by the master and apprentice. Take it in whatsoever way we may: Farming, carpentering, masonry, manufacturing, engineering. Indeed it is well known that societies have been formed among those to enlighten and assist each other in their occupation. Again what else is the object in our schools and colleges if it is not to make teachers and masters of those who are taught in their respective pursuits? And there are no callings either, but if it is possible the pupil is, even to *excel* the teacher.

But when it comes to teaching and proclaiming the everlasting Gospel of the Son of God to humanity that is perishing by going down into an everlasting night, men and women are commanded to keep silent by the innovation of electing a certain set of men to preach the Gospel, and all the rest need not concern themselves about it. In fact there is a penalty attached if anyone at-

tempts publically to promulgate the Gospel.

The plan is complete to keep power concentrated in the hands of a few, and those generally of the most factious and hot-headed men who desire to rule according to their own wills, and hold in check the work that the many in unity would prosecute according to the plan of salvation. All this disorder is brought about by an official ministry in the Gospel, that teaches that the office is of very sacred importance and must be guarded as such exalting those in office above any thing of the kind that is known in the world or that is written in the Scriptures.

Thus the proclamation of the Gospel to the poor is hindered, or if by chance it should be announced in some place it would likely be by some select preacher who would leave them in a worse state for the next representative of some other sect than if they never had heard of any Gospel at all.

The great divisions in Christendom are due to this worldly official power in the church. Were the pro-

mulgation of the never dying truths of the Gospel placed in the hands of the members of the body of Christ, whom the self constituted clergy denominate the laity, where it was placed in the beginning, and the wise and smart theorists withdraw themselves from the Christian world, it would not be a great while until sectionalism would begin to die out and Christians would begin to unite upon the plain and practical truths of the Gospel.

THE PERSONAL MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

PART II.

**THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF
A PERSONAL MINISTRY IN THE
GOSPEL EXTENDS ITSELF TO
MALE AND FEMALE ALIKE.**

**TWO VERY POSITIVE BUT ODD
TEXTS, COMPARED.**

"Let your women keep silence in

the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." 1 Cor. 14: 34, 35.

"Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." 1 Tim. 2: 11, 12.

The position taken here is, that in part at least, these texts are the manufacture of the jealous clergy, who have principally ruled since the days of the apostles, by and through whom our translations have been made and handed down to us.

With the knowledge that our translation has wholly been made by those who believe in the foreign innovation of an official ministry, it is not surprising, inconsistent and odd as these texts appear by the side of the glorious liberty of the Gospel, that they are left unmolested while an official ministry prevails in the Christian world. The clergyman has no need for them as a text, they silently play their part for him.

Neither are they by popular writers, either condemned or vindicated. True, there are many Scriptures that are not used either in public or private discussion. But where are the Scriptures as positive as the texts under consideration, and violated, as all creeds and christendom has done, to a greater or less degree, and yet neither have a word of approval or condemnation? They are not to be found.

It is important that an honorable and Scriptural disposition is made of these texts: First, because of the advantage that infidelity has in showing a clash; and, because of the good that may be realized in spreading the Gospel when properly disposed of, they being in direct apposition to that which may be so abundantly proven and supported in the doctrine of a personal ministry.

Again, for us to sit down and not think for ourselves upon this subject is precisely what the exalted clergy is pleased for us to do. This perhaps will account for the silence of the clergy upon the subject. If it may not be charged to them in this

way, then let it be charged to their ignorance and inability honorably to dispose of them. The texts are adapted to the support of an official ministry. Let the official speak upon them and if dexterously presented they can be made to appear to support an official ministry. Let them keep silent and the texts themselves, in their positive declaration have the desired effect of subjugating women and men to the recognition of the superiority of a specially called or elected clergy. That these texts have this effect is easily manifested from the fact that if they mean women, only, may not preach, this would constitute an evidence that all men may: and therefore the clergy will shift the sense a little and have it to mean only that women may not be elected or permitted the office of a minister. By this disposition of the texts they establish and subject all to an official ministry.

But when it comes down to what the texts actually say, they are so positive that they will no even permit a women to ordinarily speak in the church. And in this sense it is

right to dispose of the texts. To take Scriptures or any other declarations at their meaning, according to their wording is a right that will not only be regarded, but be supported by all honest thinkers.

All Christendom has to a greater or less degree violated the texts without giving any reason whatever except it be that it is unreasonable to force obedience to them. But it is not the intention to criticise christendom only upon this violation. The object is to show that these texts do not prevent women from publically instructing, and that too without a special call or appointment to an office, even as set forth heretofore.

Turn to 1 Cor. 11:5, and, written at the same time, by the same apostle and we read as follows: "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head." Do we not in this passage plainly understand that a woman may pray and preach? It is impossible to deny it; and yet it is in the same letter where the apostle has said that they may not speak in the church. Well, this is one tes

timony in favor of this liberty against two that prohibit it. It is right to compare the testimony. By comparison of testimony all difficult questions are decided. In fact this is the only way by which to determine between truth and error. And since iniquity already began to work in the apostles time, there is room for some doubt about the genuineness of those very odd but positive texts. Especially so when the chances in the early time of Christianity were so great for officious men to make alterations in the Scriptures.

The next testimony referred to is recorded in Rom. 16: 1, — "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenuchrea."

But some one may insist that the position of this sister was that only of a leader in general courtesies; or an assistant of women in the ordinance of baptism ect; as the clergy are inclined to explain it; and therefore was termed a servant from this consideration. But this is not justifiable, since there is not even a hint that her services were constituted

in these particulars. The plea of church-officers itself would put her upon an equality with them, who always have and do now claim to occupy the position of a servant when they defend the official position. Does it not appear to be a pretty bold undertaking by the clergy to put discriminating explanations upon words of inspiration in order to shield and support the upscriptural doctrine of an official ministry?

But let us note here that the word *also* occurs in the original; and reads: "Our sister being also a servant of the congregation in Cenchrea." This proves that she held a position equal to any in active service in that church. What this service was is not for us to specify unless we make it to be the general service of the ministry. In addition to this service she possibly may have held the position of an overseer or deacon.

The alteration makes quite a difference when the attempt is made, as has been done, to explain this service to have reference to general courtesies or other special services proper for women.

It should also be noted here that if criticisms are permitted and answered on one side the same should be allowed on the other. The criticisms that have been made on this Scripture were based upon an error in the translation. May it not now with propriety in turn be asked, why was the word *also* left out of our common translation? Omission and addition to change the sense of the original on the doctrine of a personal ministry, when it has been done by those who so jealously guard the official ministry, inclines a person to look upon the office and its supporters with some degree of suspicion.

The common version is subject to the same criticism in Rom. 16:2, relative to the same person in substituting the word *succourer* for *patroness*. There is quite a difference in the definition of these words. See the following: Succour, to relieve when in difficulty, want or distress. Patron, one who countenances, supports, or protects; an advocate. 2. One who has the gift of a benefice. This is an honorable and estimable appellation to those of superior tal-

ent and influence. Following is what Mr. Barnes in his commentary, has to say upon this word. "The word used here is also a legal term, and means properly a *patron* a *help*, and was applied to the Greeks to one who presided over an assembly; to one who became a *patron* of others; to one who aided or defended them in their cause; and especially to one who undertook to manage the cause of *strangers* and foreigners before the courts." Why has the official class made this alteration in translating the Scriptures?

This counts two testimonies where women may take part in the public affairs of the Christian church against two where they may not.

The next testimony is found in Rom. 16: 3, and reads: "Greet Priscilla and Aquilla my helpers in Christ Jesus." Priscilla was the wife of Aquilla. The prominence of these disciples may be known from the following circumstances. Paul abode with them. Acts 18; 3. They sailed with Paul into Syria, verse 18. They had a church at their house. 1 Cor. 16; 19. They were specially

remembered by the apostle, and recommended to be remembered by others as learned in these references and as it is found in 2 Tim. 4: 19.

In this little history a great prominence is given to these disciples, but all without any reference, or even the slightest hint of any call to the ministry, or any office that they occupied, or distinction between themselves. That the wife shared, in equal, if not in more prominence than the husband, is plainly indicated in the two last passages cited where the womans name is first mentioned. Quite likely that Priscilla was her husbands superior in preaching the Gospel and active church work.

Another observation necessary to make upon this passage is the substitution of the word *helpers* instead of that which is found in the original; -*Fellow-laborers*. The original reads: "Salute Pricilla and Aquilla my fellow-laborers in the anointed Jesus."

The word *helpers* is aptly put to obscure the doctrine of a personal minisiry, and support that of the official. Were even the doctrine of a

personal ministry established it would indicate degrees in the ministry which is another of those contemptible arrangements that attend an official ministry. Such things and arrangements will do for the world and is even right and indispensable in governments and societies in the world; but nothing of the kind is contemplated in the kingdom of Christ.

The efforts to obscure those passages that support a personal ministry, as has been noticed heretofore, are as diligently prosecuted in those that maintain the equal rights of women to minister in the Gospel.

Here the great apostle admits this husband and wife upon an equality with himself. This is but another manifestation of the humility and equality of the doctrine that is in many places so prominently taught and exemplified by the Savior and his apostles. Take for instance the sentence; "All ye are brethren,"— and which was uttered because of the desire that was manifested in the disciples for official distinction,— has its synonym in this, "there shall be no official positions or

any other distinction among the disciples."

This is the third testimony where women are recognized on an equality with men in the public service of the congregation.

The next testimony referred to is Rom. 16:6, and reads: „Greet Mary who bestowed much labor on us." The translation of this passage again is faulty. It should read: „Salute Mary who labored much for us." The seeming prejudice that is so prominent in the common translation is here again manifest.

It must however be admitted that it is not as positive as the two preceding passages noticed: The first which termed Phebe "also a servant;" The second termed Priscilla and Aquilla "fellow-laborers." This is equal to that of co-laborers and co-workers. These are worded in the strongest terms possible to convey the idea of equality. Nowhere in the Scripture are any different terms used so as to impress special labor or position in the church except it be the slavish position of a president or that of his assistant. Therefore

the ideas that are expressed in these passages, and the connection in which this notice of Mary stands, brings her to our notice as one of those who had the talents to do, and did do active public service in the ministry of the Gospel.

To construe this passage as having reference to that of bestowing labor on the apostle is not recognized or eulogised as labor in the Gospel. It is rather, as in the case of Martha where her concern was to make rich provisions for the Savior, rebuked. Bestowing upon the official ministry is an attendant of this class. Possibly this will account for the change of these words. From the fact that it is unscriptural to bestow much labor upon one another in the luxuries of this life, it is reasonable to conclude, even as the original reads, that this *much labor* by this woman for the apostle consisted in preaching and spreading the Gospel.

This then constitutes four testimonies for liberty and freedom, against two that restrict it. All from the writings of the same apostle.

The next testimony is Rom. 16:12,

and reads in the translation of the Diaglot as follows; "Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, those sisters laboring much in the Lord. Salute Persis the beloved, her who labored much in the Lord." The words *sister* and *her* are supplied in this translation. But it is evident from these names and the way that the original reads that they are correctly supplied, and is so admitted by all who have studied this. Mr. Barnes in his comments says: "These names with the participle rendered *who labor*, are in the feminine gender, and these were probably two holy women who performed the office of deaconess, or who ministered to the sick, and who with Persis, thus by example, and perhaps by instruction, labored to promote the spread of Christianity."

This eminent authority is quoted here more particularly to show that the names mentioned were those of females. Mr. Barnes himself, as may be noticed in his notes on 1 Cor. 14: 34, 35, believes in the silence of women in the congregation. However in the above quotation he admits that the labors of those women

may have consisted in "instruction." This admission proves that learned men even are not able to wholly deny this liberty in the Gospel. This is all the admission that need be asked from anyone to establish the doctrine.

This then, although there are three women mentioned here who have the honor of serving in the public assembly ascribed to them, will count but one testimony; which counts five for liberty against two where this honor and liberty is forbidden.

The next testimony that is introduced is found in Phil. 4: 3; and reads in the original as follows: "And I entreat also true yoke-fellow assist those women who earnestly co-operated with me in the glad tidings, and with Clement, and my other co-laborers, whose names are in the book of life."

There are no comments to make on this testimony. It requires no explanation whatever. It is as plain as language can express it that women took an active and equal part with men in the promulgation of the Glad Tidings. It is therefore utterly useless for official supporters to

try to explain this passage of Scripture that it does not permit those women to labor in an equal position in the Glad Tidings with the rest of those mentioned in this verse.

This counts six testimonies where it is plainly stated that women collaborated with the men, and even with the apostle himself, in the ministry of the Gospel against two where such liberty is prohibited. All are from the writings of the same apostle.

These Scriptures have been arrayed, not in order to arraign the apostle as all well know, but for to show the positive testimony direct from the apostle against those texts that not only clash here with the testimony of the apostle, but with many others throughout the Bible, as will be noticed hereafter.

That there is a contradiction in those passages, is plain, and this contradiction is necessary to be established in order to defeat the erroneous impression and practice that is taught and supported from the odd texts under consideration.

Since there is a contradiction it is not only a privilege, but a duty to

dispose of them and honorably sustain the sentiments of the Scriptures. This is readily done when the good reasons are considered why it may be believed that the two texts have been wrested.

A reason for this belief is, that in many of the passages so far noticed that relate to the personal ministry have been found, when compared with earlier manuscripts, to be darkened. Thus causing strong grounds to suspicion the genuineness of these texts.

Another reason is, because it has been a disputed question with the church fathers as may be learned from history. Our early church fathers contending for an official ministry and prohibit women entire of those Gospel privileges, while others disputed those things.

Another reason that supports the idea of these texts having been wrested, is that man in his barbaric state always was accustomed to rule in this manner, and this was prevalent in the time of Christ and the apostles as has already been noticed; even with the apostles themselves in the

beginning. This same disposition is still prevailing at present.

Another reason for this suspicion is, because it always has been in the nature and disposition of man to concentrate power in any cause whatever that presented the opportunity, and rule and even oppress his fellow-being. This is the kind of spirit that is manifested in those two texts; while those other Scriptures manifest the opposite,—a spirit of equality humility and that of selfdenial, as it is everywhere taught by the Savior and his apostles.

Another reason: These two texts are too positive. In their positive declaration they destroy their own intended force when analyzed. This will be noticed hereafter.

Another is: We have been warned about those who would wrest the Scriptures. 2 Pet. 3: 16. Being cautioned by inspiration of this work of iniquity which the apostle said began already in his time, having us to be upon the alert, scrutinizing the very earliest manuscripts. Even the original letters of the apostle, if it were possible to obtain them, after passing

out of the hands of the disciples into those who loved preeminence in official church power, it would be right to subject to examination by the humble and equitable spirit of Christ and the apostles.

The Scriptures of truth are subject to wresting, and no doubt have been wrested in some particulars; but it is impossible to wrest their spirit. It is good, even a happy thought to know that the Scriptures were subject to be wrested in particulars that pertain to the selfishness of man, for, by the spirit of a meek and lowly redeemer who exemplified a life that is to prevail over the spirit of mans selfish nature, it is an easy matter to detect such wresting. The knowledge also of such iniquity permits the disciples to call into question the church offices and positions that harbor and support this selfishness.

Another and the last reason offered here for the belief that these texts have been wrested is the overwhelming testimony of many other passages beside those already noticed that teach the very opposite sentiment of these texts.

WITH REFERENCE TO THE LAW.

As also saith the law. This means that the law commands women to be in subjection to the men. And that this subjection is defined in the texts as consisting in "silence in the churches." For if they will learn anything they must not ask any questions in the assembly, but ask their husbands at home: for it is an *indecent** thing for women to speak in the church. And further, they *must not teach* in the church.

We are to understand that these are the things in which women can and are commanded to show forth their subjection to man. And are referred also to the law as authority for this subjection. The privileges accorded to the women under the Jewish dispensation in affairs of the church must be that which is referred to. If womans subjection there ac-

**This is the word used in the original. Showing evidently that improvement by church officers began very early. It seems also that later on it appeared immoderately strong for officious purposes and was moderated.*

cords with the text there is at least that much to support the texts. If the Law does not accord with the texts it may reasonably be set down as being perverted like other Scriptures by the "spiritual wickedness in high places."

That the woman is, so far as this life is concerned rather dependent upon the man and therefore should show subjection in the rough and coarse affairs of this life is not denied. But even in these things, since husband and wife are one, man would, with the belief that he can own something separate and apart from his wife, sink himself in time to come by such a belief to the level of the brute so far as marriage is concerned. And it is here asserted that it can neither be found in the Law nor the Gospel where man exercises in anything superior to the woman unless it be in the coarse affairs, or heavy toils that are imposed upon him as pertaining to the provisions of this life. But when it comes to matters of religion, of teaching and instruction, in public or in a private way, at home or abroad, or even in

temporal matters where the physical constitution of the female will permit and adapt itself, the woman is placed upon an equality with the man, and since the law is referred to by the texts; to the testimony of the law shall the question be turned.

The first passage referred to is Miriam the prophetess, Exo. 15: 20, 21.

"And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."

Note the action here of this admirable woman. She, neither any of the rest of the women kept silent "in the church in the wilderness." Acts 7: 38. This occurred nearly thirty four hundred years ago. Evidently there was no distinction in this early age among the Lord's people in his congregation in regard to men only being the fit ones to speak praises to God, and about the salvation of his people. Nay, rather the reverse is learned here; women seem to be

foremost and the men silent, so far as this praise is concerned, which is common in the Law. And so far as deliverance of God's people is concerned it is even found in Mich. 6:4, that Miriam the prophetess is equal with Moses and Aaron in delivering the Hebrews:—“For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.” The text it would seem made a failure in referring to the Law in this case.

Again, coming down about seventy five years later and there is a record of another prophetess,—Judges 4:4, 5:—“And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time. And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel in mount Ephraim: And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.”

In the verses following this reference, Deborah ordered Barack to war. Barack declined unless she would accompany him. She agreed to this, but told Barack that a woman would have the honor of the con-

flict. Now, considering the part of this woman in the prosecution of the work of the Lord in this early age puts the texts with their reference into a position that is irreconcilable with the Scriptures. The texts have referred to the Law to sustain them when the Law here condemns them, in this, that a woman did through inspiration not only dictate to a man but to all Israel, in direct opposition.

Knowing that the sentiment of the inferiority of women prevailed among the heathen in all ages, and now learn from these testimonies that God recognized no such a thing among His people in the earlier ages; should itself constitute a reason to doubt the genuineness of the two odd texts under consideration; especially when we have been forewarned of the work of iniquity, the perversion of Scripture, and the concentration of church power.

Again, it is recorded in 2 Kings 22: 14—20; and 2 Chron. 34: 22—28; of Huldah the Prophetess, whom God had inspired to instruct his people concerning the book of the Law that was found, and the evil that was to

be brought upon Jerusalem. This is none other than a remarkable instance; and another one that proves that there was no difference contemplated with God whether male or female through whom He imparted knowledge and made known His will to the human family.

Perhaps some might desire to search to see if the genealogy of this woman would not entitle her to this important position and distinction. But this will only result in a failure, for so far as ability would admit there is not the slightest hint, either of this prophetess or that of Deborah, that would entitle them to their distinction by a certain line of ancestry. In fact the Scriptures do not give any at all.

The best that can be found to support the idea that Huldah the prophetess, was a special subject for this distinction is where it reads in the common version that "she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college." But this even turns out to be a mistake when compared with Lessers Hebrew bible which reads: "She dwelt in Jerusalem in the suburbs." So then there is not

even a bit of honor for the colleges, as well as genealogies, as a last resort to excuse this ancient liberty and privilege of women. All the support seems to be entirely removed in these ancient testimonies from the advocates, that man only, and he to be called by some special appointment or election, is the only proper agent of the ministry of Gods Word.

The remarkable book of Esther, as a writer says, "has always been esteemed canonical both by Jews and Christians." It is a record of the marvelous method of God in regulating, and even reversing the human affairs of individuals and nations for the good of His people and His own honor and glory. And was this not all accomplished by the downfall of one woman and the lifting up of another? Could not this all have been brought about without women figuring in it most prominently? The history as it stands has Esther to become the sole agent in bringing about those great changes in the nation and consequently the salvation of God's own people.

If men only should be the instru-

ments in those great benefits from the Creator, it would seem that king Ahasuerus could have been deposed by some providence as well as queen Vashti; or he might have sickened and died and the queen unknowingly married some Jewish young man, and those changes have been brought about wholly through the instrumentality of a man and thus evade this public benefit and great prominence coming through queen Esther. If men only should be Gods instruments to prosecute His will, why was this not done after this manner?

Right here it is equally as proper to ask why the Lord did not have men to act as prophets in the place of those women if it was the intention of Scripture to teach us that man, and that a regularly selected set of men, to the exclusion of all others should be the instruments to forward the cause of the Lord? The sum of the matter is, the Scriptures nowhere in general, neither in particular, (except in the texts) teach any such doctrine.

It is noticed in Eze. 13; 17--23, that the prophet was commanded to

set his face against the *daughters* of his people who prophesied "out of their own heart." From this it is learned that public activity of women was in evil as well as good. It is learned also from the prophet that in denouncing those daughters he did not denounce them as occupying an illegal position or calling, but the evil use they made of their calling.

Again the same is learned from Neh. 6:14, where "Nodiah a prophetess" had taken active part with other mischievous prophets that had attempted to put Neheimiah to fear when undertaking to rebuild Jerusalem.

In all probability the prophetess mentioned here was a gentile. But that we have here the case of a woman engaged in public service among the heathen should not at all seem strange; Gentiles as well as Jews are smart enough to perceive the power of women when the progress of their cause is very urging or in danger. Thus it appears among the Jews when they wished to raise a persecution against Paul and barnabas at Antioch where they first "stirred up the devout and honorable women" of the

city. Acts. 13: 50. These examples serve to illustrate the liberality of selfish and corrupt officers in the church; even as it is in politics

Coming down to the advent of the Savior it is recorded that on the eighth day after the Saviors birth, when his mother had him in the temple to present him to the Lord according to the Law of Moses, that Anna a prophetess "coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Israel." Luke 2: 36, 37, 38.

This passage is right to the point, plain and positive, that women did speak in the temple in the congregation of God under the law. Taking this testimony together with the others produced from the law puts those odd texts that refer us to the law for the subjection of women, in that of silence in the churches, into the most unreasonable position; *outside the bounds of reason!* Why, the fact is, if it may be understood, (and it is so understood,) that they refer us to the law to prove the subjection of women to men by "silence in the church-

se", it would subject them to the charge of bearing the untruth upon the very face of them.

MORE GOSPEL TESTIMONY.

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour in those days of my spirit; and they shall prophesy." Acts 2. 17, 18.

This accords precisely with Joel the prophet, even as the apostle refers also to him, and which was prophesied eight hundred years before. This is an evidence as good as one could wish or demand to support the idea that the promulgation of the Gospel is not only a privilege but a duty devolving upon every heaven born disciple, either male or female, without the worldly formality of an election by the church or the hypocritical pretention of a gift conferred by the authority of a clergy.

Turn over into Acts 21: 8, 9, and this prophecy, as relates to women, i

literally fulfilled which reads: "And the next day we that were of Pauls company departed, and came into Cesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist which was one of the seven; and abode with him, and the same man had four daughters Virgins, which did prophesy."

There is but one way that it has been observed by which the clergy evade the force of these passages; that is that this prophesying. (which Scripturally means preaching and general instruction,) was miraculous. Therefore it is said, that miraculous testimony should be produced by those who would preach outside the regular election of the church or appointment by the clergy.

This reminds one of the actions of Martin Luther: When he and Thomas Munser, whom he called his son Absalom, had to a great extent disrobed the Pope and bishops of their tyranny over the people by stirring up the princes and civil magistrates; it happened that Thomas Munser went too far for Luther in preaching civil and religious liberty and the doctrine of equality. "On bear-

ing of Munser's success, he wrote to the magistrates of Mulhausen, to advise them to require Munser to give an account of his call; and if he could not prove that he acted under human authority, then to insist on his proving *his call from God by working a miracle!!!*" Hist. Foreign Baptists, Vol I.; page 351.

This is not intended as a reflection on the adored reformer, but an example of the jealousy and bigotry that humanity is subject to where inequality and classes have the chance to flourish. This is universally the case in the affairs of this world and it has, contrary to the words of the Savior, been brought into the church:—"But it shall not be so among you." Matt. 20: 25, 26.

Are we any better than our Reformer in this respect when we ward off such passages as are quoted above respecting those daughters that prophesied, by declaring they come under miraculous power and therefore may not be used to sustain that of equality in the personal ministry?

When by the power of the church and state, which Luther supported in

a certain measure in his reformation, he caused many of the common people to be slaughtered and his friend Munser also put to death by which he forced the peasants to appeal to him, we find in the following reply to them the highth that bigotry may attain with those who claim that they are the chosen to dictate the life and care of others: "He told them the princes deserved dethroneing, yet their, (the people's,) tumults were seditious, and that they had been seduced by false teachers: that it was foolish to put all mankind upon a level, and that Abraham had slaves." *Ib.* page 356.

How much better is our method in compelling submission by the arrogant claim of the power of the church, and banish to "outer darkness" such who do not submit by expelling them from the church? None it might be said in the long run; for, if any difference, in one sense their's was no more unmerciful. Their victims were made happy in immediate death while we propose to let ours take the risks of this life under the terrors of eternal banishment in the life to come; this is about all the dif-

ference.

Another testimony is found in Rev. 2: 20—23, where a woman did actually teach and preach in the church;—“Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.”

There is not here the slightest ground even in inference from which it might be reasoned that this woman was corrupt simply because she *taught* or *preached*; but it was the corrupt doctrine taught for which she was denounced, as it is learned in verse 21;—“And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.”

Had she repented of her “fornication,” which was the charge against her, it may reasonably be concluded that she would have been spared from being cast into that bed of affliction: and “her children,” which likely were those over whom she wielded her great influence. The fact that if she would have repented, she

would with her children been spared, shows that in this case she could still have held her influential position in the church.

There are two great things learned from this passage: The first is that women may preach and teach in the church. The other is that women may become as abominable in the sight of God as men, if not more so, with their influence in teaching and preaching corruption under the guise of the Gospel.

The next testimony that is referred to upon this subject is found in 2 John 1; and reads as follows: "The elder unto the elect lady and her children." The original has the word *chosen* instead of *elect*.

There are but two other places in the Scriptures where *individuals* are being designated by referring to them as being *chosen*. The one is that of Rufus in Rom. 16: 13; The other is that of a lady in Babylon "chosen jointly" as it is learned from the original in 1 Pet. 5: 13.

There were no doubt many others who were chosen, not however from among the *laity* as the clergy

are pleased to term it, but from among the disciples who have distinguished themselves in their special gifts in the personal ministry of the same, and have proved themselves fit and able for special missions or the office of a president or assistant. Such were the seven that were chosen, the account of which is found in Acts 6. These all no doubt were, previous to their being chosen to a special service, engaged in the ministry, of the Gospel.

Why those two women were thus Scripturally distinguished and honored, it might reasonably be concluded was because of the prejudice that prevailed then as well as now against women serving in public positions in the Christian church.

The "chosen lady" under consideration, no doubt filled some important position in the church, to which she was called by a choice of the church. This choice must not be understood to have been a call to the ministry, for there is no such a thing as choosing either women or men to the ministry of the Gospel, taught in the Scriptures. It was no doubt in

the ministry of the Gospel that the lady under consideration manifested the qualifications of her being fitted to be chosen to some overseeing position in the church.

There is a great deal of difference in opinion, even among educated men about this "elect lady." As great as the effort seems to be among theologians to evade the distinction and position that this lady is honored with, it is not at all surprising that the word *elect* was at some time substituted for the word *chosen*; if any regrets they are rather sorry that not some better word was substituted to obscure the original sense and meaning. That such a disposition is prevalent is evident from the efforts put forth to make it appear that some private individual was being addressed; or that it means some particular church; or that the church in general was addressed.

But that this is no private letter, addressed to some individual occupying a private position in the church, is evident from the use of the word *chosen* in the original. The word *elect* would be sufficient to convey the

proper meaning but subjects the passage to the criticism, as some try to show, that it was the name of the lady addressed. Others that it refers to the church, the saints who are elected to be saved.

As for some particular church, or the church in general being addressed it would make a very awkward application when we read in verse 4 that the apostle "rejoiced greatly that he found of her children walking in truth." Think of it, some of the children of God found walking in the truth!

But with respect of having it refer particularly to the church in general; it is still more inconsistent when we read in the last verse of the letter about her sister who also had children and who would greet her. The general church having a sister!!

According to common sense the meaning in the last verse of the letter is that the lady addressed in the letter had a sister also "chosen," (as this word here is also used in the original,) to some position in the church and had children also, all of whom were in the church, and the apostle writes her to whom the letter is ad-

dressed the news of the profession of the children of her sister.

For the closing testimony on this subject, reference is made to 1 Pet. 5; 13, which reads in the common version as follows: "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son."

From the original word for word translation in the Diaglot this passage reads: "Salute you she in Babylon chosen jointly; and Mark the son of me."

In the quotation from the common the reader, of course, cannot see any reference whatever to the subject of woman's rights. But it is here quoted in order to show how this passage of Scripture has been wrested, like many others that relate to the subject of woman's rights as well as that of the personal ministry.

The error that occurs here, with the numerous others in the Scriptures justifies the charge of the infidel against William Penn; that he (Penn) did say: "There are many errors in the Bible. The learned know it, the unlearned had better not know

it." That which is here demanded however be he either a Quaker or any other humble and apparantly unas-suming professor of Christianity is, that these errors as far as possible should and must be made known, and those ministers who through an official position have been corrupted so that righteous judgment has failed, must be deposed; especially must this be done when it is learned that those who are so willing to dictate where this knowledge is obscured, and setting themselves forth as ministers of the Gospel and upon whom depends the life and care of others.

The cropping out of sentiments after the character above is entirely two prominent amongst the official ministry. Of course it is according to human nature to consider the source of our bread and butter as well as the honor in society derived from a noted position and the natural passion to rule: But there is a fearful risk if not a judgment pending the official ministry in such sacrilege when not willing to reform when better knowledge dictate it.

In one sense it looks discourag-

ing regarding the purity of the Holy Scriptures when observation of perversion are made as indicated in the verse under consideration. And yet it should not be discouraging when it is considered iniquity was foretold; that darkness should reign for centuries; that knowledge should be increased, and that the wise should understand. And that we have but recently began to emerge from the long reign of universal darkness that spread over the world occasioned by arrogance, ignorance, superstition and bigotry. Above all it should not be discouraging when it may be concluded that God is still at the helm, even has been through all these changes, that therefore these things had to be so.

From the original it is plain from the passage of Scripture under consideration that a woman in Babylon occupied a prominent position, and the reasonable conclusion is that she was chosen jointly by several congregations to serve them in some position.

Some think that reference was had to Peter's wife. If it was it

does not weaken the information in the least that she was not "chosen jointly" to some public position. Others again think it strange that such a prominent notice should be made of a woman and nowhere else mentioned in the Scripture. To this it may be replied that note is made of quite a number of women, and men also, that were, as it may be inferred, in active service, but of whom there is no other mention made any where in the Scriptures.

Again, it should not appear strange at all to make note of this woman in the general epistle of Peter; There was then, no doubt much more so than now, (indeed it is bad enough now,) a general prejudice in this respect. A general error requires a general correction, and should be looked for, and is just what the apostle has given us in the notice that he has made here of this woman.

THE INTENDED FORCE IN THE TEXTS REACTS ON THE OFFICIAL MINISTRY.

In the texts at the head of the subject the women are positively ex-

cluded from the personal ministry. If it were not for these texts the duty would be as clear that women are to exercise in the ministry of the Gospel as men. But these bar them from this privilege and duty. Consequently, if these are authority, and the only authority, which they are, to support this barrier, then by inference the personal ministry for the men is established by them; for, the testimony on the duty of the personal ministry noticed outside of the texts is equally as favorable for the women as the men. For, as it has already been noticed, if these bar the female portion of the church from this duty, then it constitutes an evidence that the male portion of the church may, and even shall exercise in the ministry of the Gospel. This is plain. This conclusion is impossible to evade; for where can be found such a commandment given to men as is found in these texts to the women, which constitutes the sole ground to deprive the women of a personal ministry in the Gospel?

If these texts are the authority upon which women are deprived of

this duty, and no such a command is recorded to exclude the men from this duty, of *course* that commands the men personally to exercise in the ministry of the Gospel.

To illustrate further: Suppose some one of our preachers who preach for pay would order a collection in the assembly, stating positively that contribution from the ladies will not be accepted; would this not be the same as a direct appeal that all men may and should contribute? This case is in the same form of the texts; all the difference there is, *money* is collected in the assembly by the illustration where the women are excluded; while in the texts *preaching* was the thought under consideration, where the women were also excluded. See 1 Cor. 14: 26—33; the verses that precede the texts.

The commandment that bars one from a privilege always carries with it the granting of that privilege to the one upon whom it is not imposed. Therefore the personal ministry for the male portion of the church is established; not only from the many

testimonies as noticed heretofore, but by the texts themselves, that is, so long as the advocates of them use them to exclude women from this service. Therefore it may be said that the force of the blow of the official ministry intended in the texts reacts upon their own heads; for in the effort to make shure to bind and bar the women they open this door of liberty to the men. This is the legitimate conclusion when the texts are taken to prohibit women in serving in the ministry of the Gospel.

The dilemma that the official cause is placed in now, establishes the personal ministry for men from their craftiness; for the testimony on this liberty outside these texts being equal, and now insisting that these are the barriers to women in the ministry, establishes a personal ministry for the men. And if they are not owned as a barrier to women then of course with the vast amount of testimony in favor of the personal ministry the doctrine is established for all.

That the idea generally prevails that the texts bar women from ministering in the Gospel, it is only nec-

essary to confront the advocates of these texts as to whether these texts mean what they say,— positively that women shall not speak in the church; not even to ask a question? and they will muse for a time and finally admit that they do not mean that. The fact is they dare not say otherwise, for they, as well as everybody is guilty of violating them in this respect, if there is any guilt in this violation. Very well. Then what do they mean? They answer that they mean that women may not minister in the Gospel. Now if these texts are the authority by which women are prohibited from the ministry, they do, as noticed heretofore, grant that privilege to all men. Thus they admit themselves that the intention of the texts, according to their own understanding is to prohibit women from ministering in the Gospel.

As a last resort the advocates of these texts will give themselves away by asserting that women may not be licensed or elected to the ministry of the Gospel. But has it not been shown by a legitimate conclusion from the disposition that the

advocates themselves make of these texts, as well as many other passages, that there is no such a thing taught as calling men to the ministry? And not only as regards the men, but the evidence is as strong outside of these texts that women ministered in the Gospel without the special call as that of the men; now, since it has been proven that men are to exercise in this duty without any special call, and the evidence is equally as strong outside these texts that the doctrine applies to women; Then applying the evidence that the texts produce in favor of the men, to the same cause, found in the same book, and under the same circumstances, for the same purpose, given by the same author, but is enjoined upon women, they establish the personal ministry for the women as well as the men.

These conclusions are drawn from the explanation made by the advocates of an official ministry themselves. And here may they rest upon their own hands until they tire with inconsistency and perversion.

The more honorable way to dispose of them is to charge them to the

manufacture of the official ministry. This is sustained; First, in the fact that many other Scriptures that relate to the same subject betray the hand of the official ministry. Second; because they are in the strict sense too unreasonable and intolerable to obey; a thing that the advocates have to admit themselves. Third; because they teach the very opposite that is learned from many other passages.

If these texts themselves, instead of their advocates would say that women should not be called to the work of ministering in the Gospel, then they might constitute an evidence that men should be called. And then even they would rightfully be rejected when it is proven that all the disciples took part in ministering the Gospel in the public assembly.

In case the texts would read that women should not be called to the ministry the clergy would have all to "catch on in a hurry." A single statement like this with the worldly desire that has made its way into the heart of the clergy in having sacred things systematically arranged after the manner of this world, and the in-

fluence that is wielded by them in the church would defeat all other testimonies even though it were by many others proven to be spurious. And has it not been done anyway, even without any Scripture to reason from?

As it is however the hand of the iniquitous official ministry is easily detected, even by the limited in knowledge; thank the Lord, and is an evidence of the care of the Creator over his own divine will which all may understand if diligently sought.

The conclusion is reasonable that if these texts do not mean what they say it makes it extremely doubtful when their meaning is guessed unless that meaning would be found to compare favorable with all other Scriptures relative to the same subject. The attempt to put any other construction upon them is not only a difficult undertaking if we want to avoid exposure, but it is wicked. Men should not undertake to dictate for the record of inspiration.

These texts are too strong in their expression, even in the common version, say nothing of their positive expression in the Diaglot where it

reads: "It is an indecent thing for a woman to speak in an assembly." This being from the earliest manuscripts proves that tinkering of this kind in the Scriptures had been practiced very early in the Christian age.

It is also evident that this tinkering in the Scriptures was practiced for centuries, for, finding these passages put into such strong language in the earliest manuscripts shows that this mischievous work began previous to the date of the earliest manuscripts now extant; then finding that alterations have been made, by comparing the earliest with the common version proves that this iniquitous work has been practiced down until the common Bible now in use was revised. Evidently, however, these alterations were slight, doing damage only in instances like the subject under consideration where the gratification of selfish motives prompted it, such as distinction, honor and church-power. The word *church* everywhere is substituted for *assembly* and *congregation*; another error caused by the officious clergy. The love to speak of

church organization prompted this, knowing that organization can not be effected without a duly installed set of church officers. Then of course follows that of a systematically arranged church government, a creed, and the ungodly practice of expelling our brethren on matters of opinion.

The spirit, and consequently the foundation, of the plan of salvation however has always been preserved in spite of the iniquitous work of the "man of sin" and the enmity and hatred of the nonprofessor and infidel.

A reason why the Gospel will stand mutilation and perversion at the hand of the profane in attempting to maintain an official system of church government, and yet maintain its primitive purity, is because it never was designed to teach any such science as church government by a regularly elected set of officers who are to pattern in their methods and execution of this spiritual power after the powers of this world.

The principle couched in the sentence, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and returning good for evil, is the governing factor of Divinity and is

entirely beside any system of government that is possible to be originated in the human heart to govern the savage disposition of man.

Had the Gospel been delivered to the world with the intention to positively say in all respects what a man must and must not believe and do, with penalties of expulsion from the church and consigned to "outer darkness" if violated, it would not have been by an All Wise Creator so wrecklessly written, if we are allowed the expression. There are many passages upon which the religious world is divided where the extra insertion of a word or two would forever have settled the disputed doctrine. But the plan of salvation was not manifested in this way. The record of it is arranged that the disciples must search for the truth, and that diligently, and with a selfdenying spirit, and with a sincere desire to obey and live in it. Therefore testimonies being weighed by such a desire and disposition, the whole life is subject to be turned about as light and knowledge flows from the Word.

When it is discovered in us that

we are not willing to lay down our lives in the loss of our preconceived ideas when convicted by a preponderance of testimony upon any subject whatever taught and exemplified by the Savior and his witnesses, it can be set down that we are not right at heart. We have yet a stubborn and selfish disposition lurking there that must be broken up. Such characters are readily detected and manifest, for there are doctrines sufficient in the Scriptures that do not come under a positive commandment that will test all of our wicked hearts. And for this very same reason may it not have been good to subject the Holy Scriptures to perversion like the instance under consideration, and others that might be cited that give sanction to the selfish motives that are inherent in the human heart, and thereby give to those who wanted to believe a lie the occasion to freely indulge in it?

The seeming deficiencies in the Scriptures that confront our natural views in not positively stating modes and methods, but which must be established and believed in by circumstantial evidence; and where this can

not be obtained, forbearance the only seeming remedy; as well as the seeming weakness of the Holy Scriptures being subject to perversion, is all filled up and made perfectly sound and whole in love. Love, first toward our Creator in such a degree that we will have to lose all of self, and diligently and sincerely search for His will, subjecting our whole life to be turned about, and we carried whither, otherwise we would never come. Then love toward our fellowbeing so that we *will never* force our wishes upon them by church decisions or by majorities about us.

Therefore these unnatural and seemingly weak things that occur in the record of the Scriptures, partially brought about by perversion and partially permitted by inspiration, solve themselves into the great law of the Gospel. Whereas without these wise and divine plans and methods to subdue our selfish natures and dispositions we are left to be driven out upon the dark and dangerous ocean of speculation to engage in war and fighting.

Let the laws of love and reason be the weapons by which to overcome.

those who disagree with the doctrine of a personal ministry, and many other things that popular christianity is rejecting, but was taught by the Lord Jesus and witnessed to us by his apostles; all of which things have a mighty preponderance in testimony from the acts of the apostles afterward, as learned in the epistolary writings. When the Lord sees fit to permit the divisions that are to come, rejoice ye who are on the side of being shamefully cast out. This constitutes the best evidence this side of eternity that you are on the right track. Oh, the Christian world have overlooked the mighty principle of love, the masterwheel in the economy of grace! *We are all guilty!*

It is all right to deduct a certain lot of rules from the Scriptures by which to regulate our lives, and it is right to introduce them and recommend them and propogate them in the spirit of love, but it is getting outside the love and spirit of the Gospel when they are set up similar to a code of laws and brought under a system of church government and proceed to disown those of our brethren

who differ with us. Then, and worst of all, expose our ignorance in claiming that all was done in the love and spirit of the meek and lowly Redeemer, who never condemned any man.

If the conference in Jerusalem, (Acts 15.) may be referred to as a precedent for an association and the discussion of difficult questions then stay strictly by the precedent, decide upon questions if it can be done, and propagate them in peace. If not in peace follow the example of the apostle in Acts 15: 3, 4;— Though he was certain that circumcision was not required, witnessed by the Holy Ghost itself, yet rather than to break the peace with the brethren he had Timothy circumcised, having the decrees of the council in Jerusalem in his possession at the same time for to distribute in the cities. Brethren, *can't you understand this?*

A RESOLUTION.

Seeing that an official ministry is antagonistic to the freedom, skill and knowledge, prosperity and equality of the Gospel; and beside these sub-

jects the Gospel to go a begging for money in order to be forwarded in the world; it is therefore resolved to form an assembly wherever two, three or more are willing to unite for the purpose of conversing and assisting each other in the ministry of the Gospel.

If we communicate with each other respecting the best methods and arguments to be employed on different subjects in the propagation of the Gospel, it will not be long until the talent of teaching will be developed, and will take its place in the assembly; not however after the manner of the Roman clergy, but after the manner of Christ in denying themselves in order to assist others in qualifying themselves in the ministry for the spreading of the Gospel. The talent of governing would also become manifest in due time that a spirit of equity and fairness would prevail in the assembly. Likewise all other talents or gifts would manifest themselves for the benefit of the assembly.

The appointing of presidents (elders, aged persons) and their assistants, would as a matter of course follow in the increasing of the assembly, even as it did in the apostolic age.

Setting out to accomplish these

things, brethren and sisters must not permit their resolution to be defeated by those ministers who sanction the personal ministry, yet keep their position, telling us to go and preach. This is rather adding insult to injury. Those who say this, even in good faith, do not for a moment consider that we have honored and encouraged them, not only in the belief that they have been most sacredly called to go and preach the Gospel, but when they were weak, timid, blundering, and even spiritually untutored we spake kindly and encouragingly to them, and then for years given them honor and audience until they have become masters in controlling their thoughts and greatly extended their knowledge in various subjects. Require more than a sanction of these. Let them serve the congregation as teachers with their practical knowledge, or go and preach the gospel themselves, and let others teach and preside in the congregation at home.

Those who speak disparaging of the personal ministry should be made to understand that they cannot have your crown; (Rev. 3: 11.) that they are overbearing, and proud, and assuming the position of an impostor, and that too, through a gift that yourself assisted in bestowing upon them.

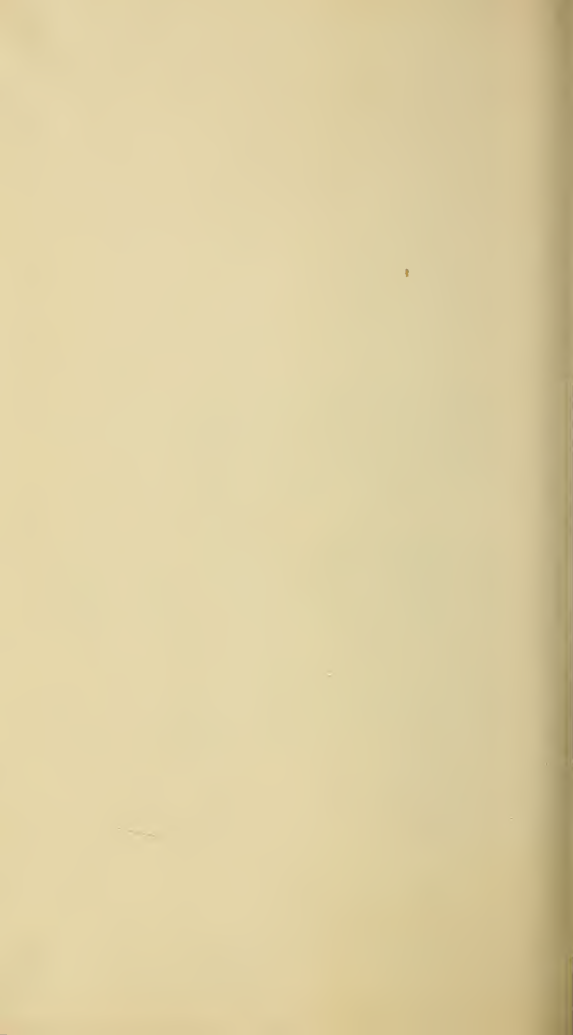
"And they that be wise shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." Dan. 12: 4.

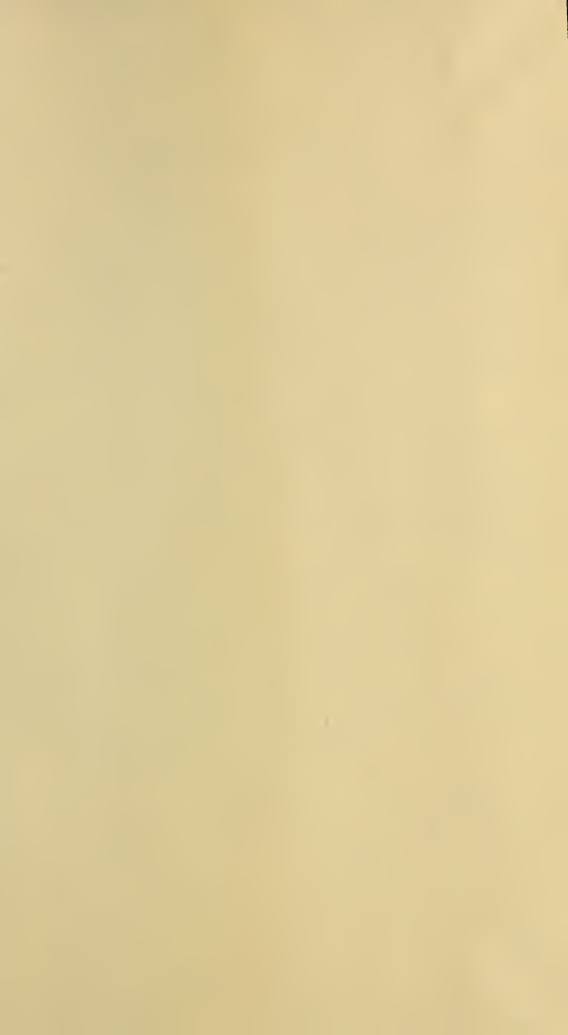
"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things." Rom. 10: 15.

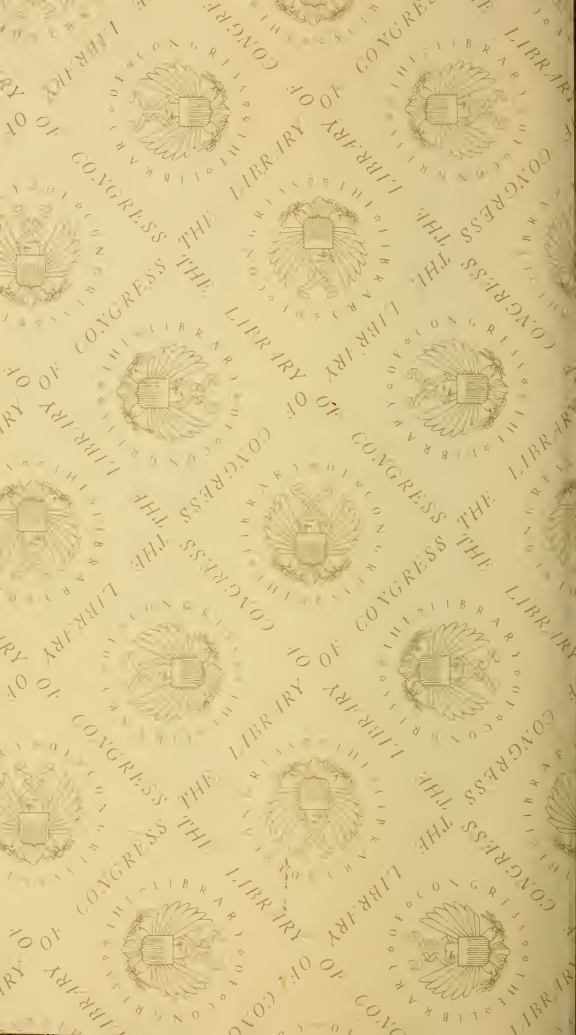
THEN,

"Go into all the world, and proclaim the Glad Tidings to the whole creation." Mark 16: 15.











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